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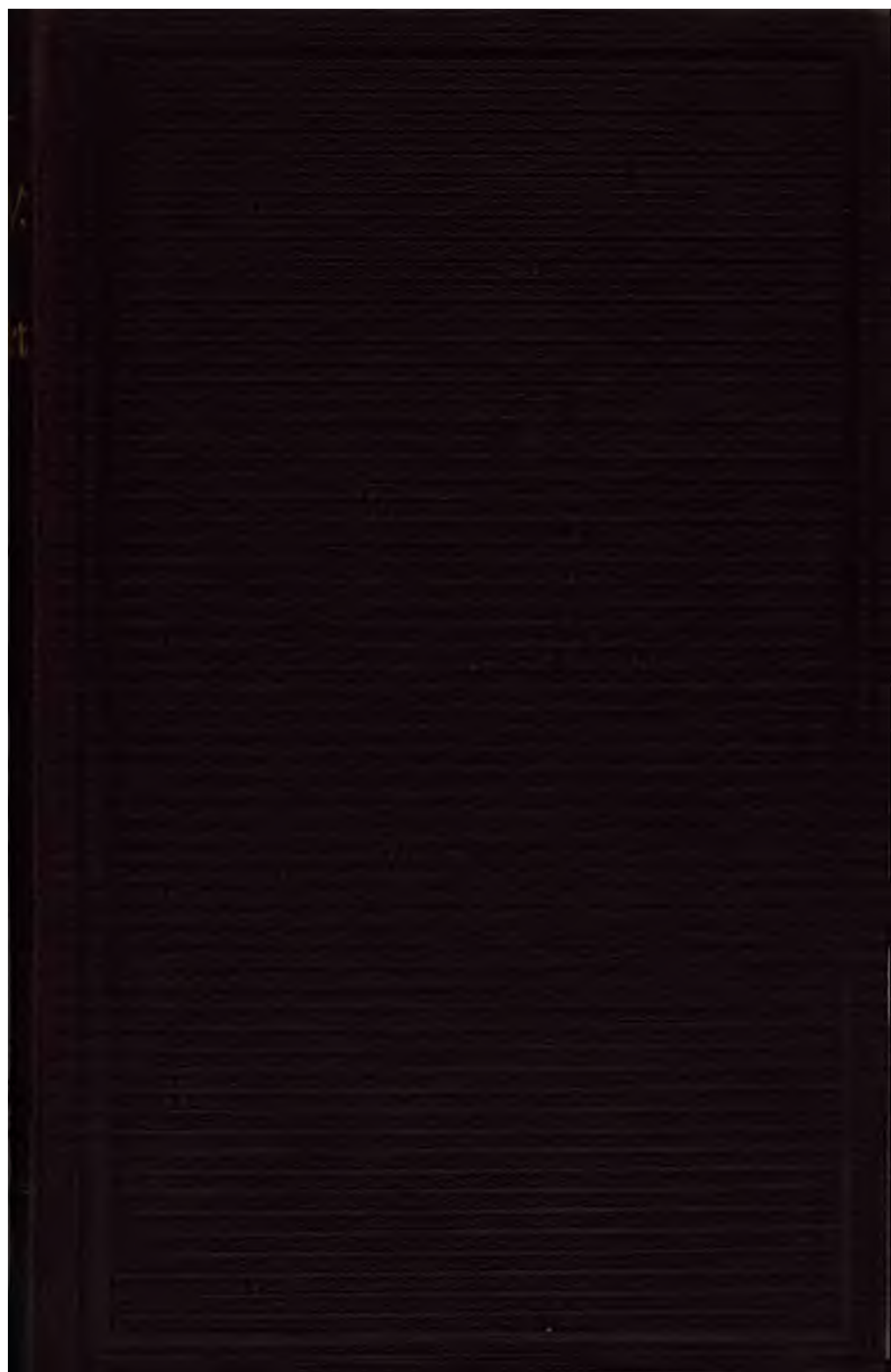
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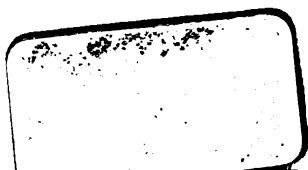
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WALTER LANGLEY.

VOLUME I.



WALTER LANGLEY,

OR

THE RACE OF LIFE.

BY

THE HON. CHARLES STUART SAVILE,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.

TO

MY MOTHER,

WITH

THE MOST AFFECTIONATE

LOVE AND REGARD.

WALTER LANGLEY,

OR

THE RACE OF LIFE.

INTRODUCTION.

The Race of Life commences.

THE banks of the river Thames, on the side opposite Windsor, just above the bridge which joins that town to Eton, presented one fine summer's evening a most animated appearance. A large crowd, composed almost entirely of boys of all ages, from the youth of nearly eighteen

down to the mere child of eleven, was assembled on the green sward called the Brocas; talking, laughing, and shouting in the most joyous manner. The river itself was also a scene of movement, as numerous little skiffs, wherries, and funnies were gliding up and down the rapid stream, propelled by the arms of youths of various ages.

"I am sure Hartley will come in first!"

"No, Stuart for me!"

"I'll back Power!"

"Tremaine major against the field!"

"Tremaine major, indeed! I would not give sixpence for his chance, as he starts in the last row."

"Smith minor for me, he starts in the first row of all, and can handle his sculls as well as any fellow among them."

"Oh! he is a *neat* sculler enough, I

grant, but wants strength and wind to keep it up long."

"There go Langley and Woodmount, how they do skim along!"

"But they are to start in the last row."

"Never mind that, I am ready to back them against the field, if they can but manage to keep clear of the other boats, and you may be sure no one will bump them on purpose, they are too good fellows for that."

Such were the remarks made in quick succession by the gay, happy youths running up and down the banks, and who were all students of Eton College, assembled for the purpose of witnessing a boat-race, called the "Eton Sculling Match," which annually takes place during the summer *half*, the competitors for the prize being composed entirely of Eton boys.

Each boat that was to start was occupied by a single boy, who was seated in the centre, holding a scull in each hand, with which he propelled the light fabric.

The distance to be rowed was about four miles; the first two miles of the race being up and the remainder down stream, the competitors returning to a short distance below the point of starting, which was about two hundred yards above Windsor Bridge.

Two of the skiffs on the river attracted particular notice, from the masterly manner with which their occupiers handled their sculls, and it was evident, from the numerous flattering remarks made by those who were deemed the best judges of aquatic matters, that they were considered far superior to all the others, but at the same time some doubts were suggested as to either of them being eventually the

winner, as the competitors for the prize were handicapped, that is, they were to start in several rows, a distance of two yards intervening between each, and, as was naturally to be supposed, those considered to be the best scullers were placed in the last row, and would therefore experience great difficulty in passing the boats starting before them, as each time two boats going up-stream should happen to fall foul of each other, a great deal of time would be lost, during which the boats starting from a higher row would have managed to gain a great distance in advance.

The two scullers, whose proficiency called forth such general admiration, were named Lord Woodmount and Walter Langley, the former being the son and heir of the Earl of Forestdale, a wealthy English peer, and the latter the son of a younger brother of that nobleman. From their well-

known skill in the art of sculling they had both been placed in the last row, and as there were nearly fifty starters it was evident that it would take a great deal of tact and powerful exertion for either of them to get to the front of the line; but every one felt certain that, if either should but once succeed in heading all the others, his boat would be certain to keep the lead until the end of the race.

The skiffs having been at length arranged in order, a gun was fired as a signal for starting, when, as might have been expected, a scene of great confusion ensued, from those who had been placed in the lower rows overtaking those before them; and many a fine sculler soon perceived his chance of winning to be lost, by his boat getting entangled with one he had overtaken, but was unable to pass, owing to

being locked in in such a manner by other skiffs as to prevent his using his sculls.

At length, after various episodes had occurred, a loud shout rang through the air; it was caused by a skiff that had started from the lowest row shooting ahead of all the rest, the light fabric being sculled in such a vigorous manner that, by the time it had reached that point of the river called Lower Hope, it was nearly fifty yards ahead of the nearest boat that followed in its rear.

"By Jove! Woodmount will win! bravo, old fellow! pull hard!" cried several boys, who, as they boarded at the same tutor's house with him they had named, felt a feeling of pride at "one of theirs" being the winner of the race.

Onwards went Lord Woodmount, a feeling of exultation shot through his frame

as he saw himself so much ahead of his competitors, over whom it seemed to him that he was gaining ground at every stroke. He felt no fatigue, and was indeed sculling with great ease to himself. His light skiff shot rapidly through the stream, and by the time he had passed the bend in the river, called Upper Hope, he felt certain of winning, an opinion generally held by those running along the banks.

Lord Woodmount had arrived within a few hundred yards of the *Rushes*, the point in the river round which the boats were to turn and commence descending the stream, when he perceived, more than a hundred yards in his rear, a skiff much in advance of those that followed. Although it was evident that it must have of late gained upon him, the intervening distance was so great that Woodmount felt no fear of his being overtaken, even were the occu-

pier of the skiff a sculler much superior to himself.

The Rushes were reached, and Woodmount, having gone round them, commenced his progress down the stream ; but he had not gone far before he met a boy in a skiff going up. A mutual recognition took place as they went by each other.

“ Well sculled, Woodmount ! ”

“ Bravo, Walter ! ”

Such were the exclamations uttered by them ; the next moment each was out of hearing of the other’s voice.

Onwards went Woodmount, cheered by those running along the banks ; no one had the least doubt of his reaching the goal long before even the second boat, and their opinion was that of Woodmount himself.

He was approaching Lower Hope, when it struck him that the skiff rowed by his cousin seemed at a much less distance

than when it had turned the Rushes, and it became evident to him that Walter was gaining on him. It caused him, however, no fear.

"He may get pretty near me, but he will never be able to pass me before I get below bridge." Such was the young nobleman's reflection, as he exerted himself to the utmost, and sent his skiff through the water like an arrow from a bow.

"I'm hanged if Langley is not gaining on him!"

"What a fellow he is!"

"What wind!"

"How he does cut along!"

"He'll pass Woodmount before he gets to the Brocas-clump."

"That I'll swear he will!"

"What wind he has got!"

"And what pluck!"

"How beautifully he feathers his sculls!"

The above were the remarks made in rapid succession by the spectators of the race.

So great was the progress made by the second boat, that before long there were not fifty yards intervening between the two cousins.

"Pull hard, Woodmount," cried some of the boys, running along the banks, "Langley is gaining on you like nothing!"

There was no occasion for the counsel, as the sculler in the first skiff was using his utmost endeavours to prevent being overtaken; hope had not yet left his breast, for he still felt certain of keeping the lead to the end.

"It is lucky that we have not much further to go," he thought, "for that fellow

Walter might in that case be able to pass me, but as it is I do not think he can by any possibility overtake me before I get under bridge; he must have the devil himself helping him to get along."

By the time, however, that he had got opposite the Brocas-clump, Woodmount began to lose courage, for a very few boats' lengths only intervened between the skiffs, and in a few moments afterwards they were nearly side by side.

Despair now took possession of the young nobleman's heart. "I shall only be second," he thought. "Hang it! old fellow, you *are* going it!"

This last observation was made just as they were passing the upper end of the "Ayott," in front of the Brocas, for a vigorous stroke of his sculls caused Walter's skiff to shoot past the one sculled by his cousin.

A loud shout rent the air, encouraged by which Walter pulled vigorously on, and went beneath the middle arch of the bridge several boat-lengths in advance of Lord Woodmount.

Walter Langley had won the Sculling Match of the year 184—.

Bitter were the tears shed by Lord Woodmount in his bed that night; he felt that the race of life had commenced between him and his near relative, and that the first heat had been won by the latter.

* * * * *

Our readers must now allow themselves to be carried back more than seventeen years, to an epoch preceding the birth of the two chief actors in the above chapter.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

The reader is introduced to several persons, with some of whom he may eventually make further acquaintance.

WE have never yet been able to find the town of Longmoor set down in any of the maps of England we have hitherto consulted; nevertheless from its picturesque site, its well-built houses, and cleanly, well-paved streets, it is scarcely deserving of such a contemptuous omission. It is certainly neither a large nor a densely populated town; it never had the honour of

sending a representative to the House of Commons, not even during those halcyon days when rotten boroughs had not, as yet, been swept away by the ruthless scythe of the Reform Bill. It has never, it must be confessed, made any great figure in history, though it is asserted by some antiquarians that, during the wars of the Roses, Queen Margaret passed a night there. It possesses no manufactures, and no great physician has as yet discovered a spring of mineral water in its environs, still it is a place of some importance, at least in the opinion of its principal inhabitants, who pride themselves on their gentility.

In the way of public buildings, Longmoor possesses a respectable-looking mansion-house, a bank, a church, and two dissenting chapels. It also has an inn, dignified with the appellation of the "Piebald Horse Hotel," and several public-houses,

one or two of which are, by courtesy, styled inns.

Unfortunately for Longmoor it lies out of the line of any railway, although before the commencement of the railway epoch the high road between York and London ran straight through its main street, and more than one coach was wont to stop at the Piebald Horse, for the purpose of changing horses, and that the passengers might dine or sup.

We will not, however, make any further remarks upon the little town in question (notwithstanding it really deserves some notice being taken of it), for although the scene of the opening chapter is laid in Longmoor, very little further mention of the place will be made in the succeeding pages of the following narrative. It will have served its purpose, that of introducing to our readers several person-

ages who will appear more than once during the course of our story, which commences as follows :

On a frosty night, about the commencement of the month of January, in the year of grace 182—, just as the church clock was striking nine, a stage-coach drove up to the door of the Piebald Horse, the principal, or, more properly speaking, the only inn of Longmoor, a small town situated in the north of Lincolnshire.

As soon as the vehicle had pulled up four passengers alighted from the outside, whose appearance contrasted most forcibly, for while two of them were so excessively corpulent as to give a very tolerable conception of what a couple of porpoises would look like if muffled up in great coats, the other two were as slender and long-shanked as a couple of storks.

None of them, however, gave the by-

standers much time for remarking their personal attractions or defects, for as soon as they had alighted they all hastily directed their steps towards the parlour, where supper was laid out, and employed the next succeeding moments in divesting themselves of their upper garments, and warming their half-frozen bodies at the cheerful fire, which crackled and glimmered, as if rejoicing in being employed in such a benevolent occupation.

While the outside passengers were thus engaged, the interior of the stage-coach had given forth its contents in the person of a single traveller, a grave, sedate-looking man, somewhat past the meridian of life, who, having formally bowed to the curtsying landlady, followed in the track of his fellow-travellers to the supper-room.

The great coats and handkerchiefs having been removed, their enclosures became

revealed to public gaze, when the stout passengers seemed of scarcely less dimensions than while enveloped in their bulky upper garments, and their fat cheeks and round paunches told of the discussion of many a roasted sirloin. Any one accustomed to journey on that line of road would have felt little hesitation in dubbing them North-country farmers or graziers, well to do in the world. As for the two passengers of slighter mould, they proved to be young men of about five-and-twenty years of age; their appearance was of that nondescript sort termed shabby-genteel, and had they remained silent it would not have been easy to make any shrewd guess as to their profession or calling, but on their tongues being set into motion, no doubt could have remained on the subject in the mind of any one accustomed to meet with provincial actors.

“Good Sirs,” exclaimed the shorter of the two, a young man, who had that dark, bilious-looking complexion which generally appears dirty by daylight, unless its proprietor be exceedingly well-dressed and wear linen of an unexceptionable hue (which was certainly not the case in the present instance), “Good Sirs, the banquet waits, may it please your Highnesses to grace us with your royal company?”

The invitation so hospitably given was decidedly superfluous, for the passengers were already seating themselves at the table, and seemed quite prepared to do ample justice to the good cheer of mine hostess of the “Piebald Horse.”

“A glass of brandy-and-water, hot with,” cried one of the stout passengers, in a very broad Yorkshire dialect.*

* The author has spared the reader the inflection of the Yorkshire dialect being written as spoken.

"The same for me," said the other stout traveller, speaking with the same broad accent, "and mind there be plenty of sugar in it, as I likes my liquors sweet."

"Pops, my boy," asked one of the thin passengers, the same who had already spoken, addressing his companion, "what say you to our following the example of these gentlemen? Let us drink and quaff, for I am sick of this false world, and will love nought but even the mere necessities upon it."

"With all my heart, Cockle," was the answer; "here, you representative of Gany-mede yclept waiter, bring two goblets of the glowing nectar."

"And be quick about it," added his friend, "for the king does wake to-night and takes his rouse."

"Directly, genelman," replied the

functionary spoken to, somewhat puzzled by the peculiar language in which the order was couched. "Four brandies and water, hot with ; what shall I bring up for you, sir ?" he continued, addressing the inside passenger.

"A pint of sherry," was the answer, which raised the speaker to an immeasurable height in the waiter's estimation, as that personage hastened to the bar for the purpose of executing the various orders he had received.

"Might I ask you for a slice of the sirloin before you, sir ?" said the inside passenger to his right-hand neighbour, who was sitting at the head of the table ; "it looks very tempting."

"Prime, sir, prime," answered the person addressed, as he cut a large slice off the joint ; "why, bless me, I don't think

I've gotten a finer among all my beasts, and they be grand indeed."

"A grazier, I presume, sir?" observed the inside passenger, civilly, "going to London, I suppose?"

"You're right, sir," said the other, "I've sent off a lot of as bonny droves of beasts and some as prime sheep as ever you would wish to clap your eyes on, and me and my partner yonder be a-going up to London to see after them; as, says I, there be nothing like a master's eye to keep things in order."

"No doubt at all about it, sir," responded the inside traveller; "if all masters were like you, affairs would be in general much better conducted than they are."

"Most potent, grave, and reverend seignior," here interrupted the young man, who had been addressed by his companion

by the name of Cockle, and speaking to the other stout passenger who sat at the top of the table, "might I trouble you for a potato?"

"My name's Smithers," returned the grazier, somewhat testily, as he placed the desired vegetable upon the proffered plate.

"A right good name, and one of fair repûte," observed the young man.

"I should rather like to meet with any chap as would say anything to the contrary about my name," was the somewhat gruff answer; "I never had the pleasure of meeting with you before to-night, sir, so you must excuse me if I don't return the compliment."

"My name is Cockle, on the Gram-pian hills my father feeds his flocks," returned the other in a grave voice.

"Well!" said the grazier, "sheep-walks bring in a very bonny thing some-

times, if so be the rot will but keep off the animals. Where be situated them as belongs to your father, sir?"

"Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote and inaccessible by shepherds trod," replied Mr Cockle.

"Why, the grass can't be over-bonny in such a place as that," exclaimed the grazier with a stare of surprise; "it must be a rum sort of a grazing ground to feed sheep on, surely they would fatten twice as well on the wolds."

"Smithers, my boy," remarked the other grazier, after a pause had elapsed, during which the passengers had been busily engaged with their knives and forks, "it be a rare cold night, I rather reckon as how we shall have more than enough of it by the time we get to London."

"So much the better for the Excise," returned his partner, "we must manage to

keep the cold without by means of plenty of hot with."

"Ha! ha! not so bad that of yours," cried Mr Cockle; "your jolly good health, sir, may the present moment be the worst of your life!"

"Thank you, sir, much obliged," returned the honest Yorkshireman, "the same to you."

The party were in the mean time engaged in demolishing, with right good will, the viands set before them, and for some minutes no other sound was to be heard but the rattling of the knives and forks, and the creaking of the waiter's shoes as he moved to and fro administering to the wants of the hungry travellers.

At length, their appetites being somewhat appeased, the inside passenger inquired whether the coach was going to take up any additional fares at the hotel.

"One inside," responded the waiter.

"Male or female, young or old?" asked Mr Cockle, looking up with his mouth full.

"As handsome a young lady as ever you set eyes on in all your life," was the answer.

"Whence comes she?" continued the young man, "is she from the North or South?"

"She's a lived about a mile off," said the waiter, "pritty nigh come she were born, with an old uncle as is just dead; we be mighty sorry, surely, to lose her, for she be the sweetest angel ever seen."

"It appears, Ganymede," interrupted Mr Cockle, "that you are occasionally blessed with a sight of such celestial messengers; is the one under present discussion going the whole way?"

"Yes, sir," was the answer, "she be

about to travel all along to London town, a wearisome distance, to be sure."

"Ay! that it is," remarked the inside passenger, "and for a young girl too; does she travel alone?"

"There be the harm on it," exclaimed the waiter, energetically, "Miss Worthington be about to enter that den of thieves without any other protection save her own innocence, and I fears as how that be not an over-strong guard in such a place of Babylonious wolves."

"I presume, Ganymede!—" began Mr Cockle, when he was interrupted by the waiter.

"Excuse me, sir, my name's not Gan-
nermud," observed that functionary; "I'm
called Jobs, Aaron Jobs."

"Well, good Mr Aaron Jobs," continued Mr Cockle, "I presume from your evident antipathy to the metropolis that

you have never, as yet, directed your wandering footsteps thitherwards?"

"Beg pardon, sir," stammered out Mr Jobs, evidently somewhat bewildered, "beg pardon, but I don't exactly understand."

"He means to remark," said the other young man, "that he supposes you have never been in London."

"No, sir, I never has," replied the waiter, "and what's more, I hope I never shall."

"The citizens are much to be pitied," observed Mr Cockle, "I trust that for their sakes in particular, and for the sake of humanity in general, you may eventually be induced to change your rash resolve."

"Never, sir, never," exclaimed Mr Jobs, in a tone of voice expressive of his abhorrence of what he was pleased to term a den of thieves and a place full of Baby-

lonious wolves, in consequence of a personal friend, during a short visit to the Metropolis, having had his pocket picked of his purse in the Strand.

At this moment the guard, popping in his head at the door, cried, "Coach ready, gentlemen!"

"Coming," was the general reply, as a universal rush was made towards the great coats, shawls, and handkerchiefs that hung upon the walls of the supper-room.

While the above-mentioned scenes were going forward in the parlour of the "Piebald Horse," a young man of the most fashionable and aristocratic appearance was seated in an adjoining room, at a table upon which was set a dessert and a bottle of claret.

This person did not appear to be a votary of Bacchus, or, perhaps, his thoughts were wandering elsewhere, for, although

some time had elapsed since the wine had been brought in, it had been scarcely tasted.

Suddenly a knock was heard at the door, and a man entered, who was immediately accosted by the occupant of the room.

"Well! Dyson, what news? Have you found out anything concerning the young girl?"

"Yes, my Lord!" returned the man addressed, "the lady is a Miss Worthington, niece to an old East India Colonel, just dead, and who it appears lived in the neighbourhood. Miss Worthington is going to start to-night by the very coach the passengers of which are now taking supper in the parlour of the inn; it is her intention, it appears, to take up her quarters in the house of her guardian, a Mr Macpherson they call him."

"In what street does the guardian live?" inquired the other.

"I have not been able to learn, my Lord," returned Dyson, "for the people of the inn do not seem to know, and on the lady's luggage there is only written '*Miss Worthington, passenger to London.*' I tried to pump something out of the servant, as close, tough an old codger as ever breathed, but there was no getting a word out of the fellow, he seemed so put out at his young mistress's departure; anyhow, I have found out that she travels alone, as there is only one place taken in her name."

"I must, shall, and will discover her address," said the nobleman, with energy; "I never met a girl so suited to my taste, notwithstanding her eyes being inflamed with crying; by Jove, what must they be like when she smiles? Listen, Dyson, go directly and take your place to London by

the coach. Follow the young lady to her guardian's house, and when you have found it out—mind you don't make any blundering mistake—go home and wait till I return, I shall not be more than a couple of days on the road; here is some money to pay your fare and other expenses. Have you perfectly understood my directions?"

"Yes, my Lord," answered the servant, bowing respectfully as his master placed several sovereigns in his hand.

"Wait a moment, Dyson," continued the nobleman, as the domestic was moving to the door; "are you certain that no one in these parts has got any idea of who I am?"

"Quite sure, my Lord," said the man, "for when your Lordship travels in the plain carriage, Joseph and me always take care never to let out your Lordship's

cognito, according to your Lordship's particular orders."

"That is right, Dyson," returned his master; "there is nothing I dislike more than being my-lorded by the natives of a country inn. Were they to find out my name and title in this outlandish place, I should not enjoy a moment's peace as long as I staid."

The servant having left the room, his young master, for the nobleman was still in the bloom of youth, poured out a glass of claret and fell into a deep reverie.

"I never met a handsomer or a more lovable girl in the whole course of my life, and one better worth the trouble I am taking;" such were his thoughts; "it cannot be a very difficult affair either, for guardians are seldom as vigilant as fathers or mothers; besides, she is going to travel alone and in a stage-coach; that proves

that, though she may be very respectable, she cannot be overburdened with riches. Come what may, whether I succeed or not, it will cause me some excitement, and I am in want of it, for there are moments that I almost feel *blasé*. Still, I do not think I am used up yet, or near it. Gad! this is not bad claret for a country inn; I wonder where they manage to get such good stuff?"

But we will leave the young nobleman to his meditations, and return to those whom we left on the point of resuming their journey.

On reaching the passage where it opened upon the outer door of the inn, the travellers found it almost blocked up by an assemblage of persons, in the midst of which was a beautiful young girl, dressed in deep mourning, leaning on the arm of an aged female domestic. Tears were flow-

ing down her cheeks, as she listened to the words of a clergyman who was standing at her side and attempting to administer the consolation of which it was but too evident, from the mournful expression of his countenance, he was himself much in need. Close behind them was an aged manservant, who made no attempt to conceal his grief, to which he was indeed giving way in a most audible manner. There was something so very touching in the scene, that even the stout graziers felt a huskiness rise in their throats as they passed. As for the two younger passengers, they appeared to survey the group with an air of great interest, especially Mr Cockle.

“A devilish fine idea, that, for a melodrama,” he whispered to his friend; “act second—scene last—the departure of the heroine for a distant land—explosive grief

of lamenting friends and relations'—why, it would bring down the gallery upon the pit. Hang me if that is not the slappest up girl I ever set my two eyes upon—

'See how she leans her hand upon her cheek.
Oh! that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!'

What a Desdemona she would make—

'O Desdemona! dead? dead? O! O! O!'

Any further quotations from the mouth of the accomplished Shakespearian were here cut short by a loud blast from the guard's horn.

"Bless you, Heaven bless you, my kind, good, dear friends!" cried the young girl, as she embraced the old woman, and shook hands with the clergyman.

"May the same Heaven watch over and protect you," exclaimed the latter, as he conducted her to the coach-door. "Re-

member, my dearest Paulina, that you will ever find a friend in me."

"Of that I feel sure, my dear Mr Pearson," returned Paulina, as she took her seat within the coach; "you have ever been a real friend to me, never can I forget your kindness, nor yours, Margaret, nor yours, Abel; may you be all happy!"

With these words she sunk back, overcome by the excess of her grief, while a loud blubbing explosion was heard issuing from the mouth of the old man-servant, addressed by the name of Abel.

Mr Cockle and his friend next proceeded to enter the vehicle, having fortunately obtained leave from the good nature of the guard to occupy the vacant seats as long as they should not be taken by any paying passenger; this favour called forth some murmurs of envy from the mouths of the two stout graziers, who could

not help reflecting with feelings of great disgust upon the difference of temperature existing between the outside and inside places.

"Hang those mountebanks," said Mr Smithers, "they seem regularly wide awake; I wish we had thought of doing the same thing before the idea came into their nod-dles, for it's biting cold."

"Well, we must make it up with plenty of hot brandy and water," returned the other grazier, as they got up and seated themselves behind the coach-box. "You are right, though, the cold bites just like a weasel's tooth."

The original inside passenger had in the mean while been engaged in a short conversation with the clergyman, and as the former was about to take possession of his place, Mr Pearson proceeded to present him to the young girl.

“My dear Paulina,” he said, “Mr Rimsdale, whom I have had the pleasure of meeting before, has kindly consented to take charge of you during the journey; I trust, however, that nothing will happen that may cause you to require his protection. Once more, my dearest girl, God bless you.”

The coachman had by this time taken the reins from the ostler and mounted the box, upon which the nobleman's servant was already seated. “All right” was called by the guard, and away went the York Union, followed by the good-byes and good wishes showered forth from all sides.

CHAPTER II.

The York Union progresses towards London.

PAULINA WORTHINGTON was the daughter of a naval officer, who had fallen in the service of his country while she was still in her infancy. Lieutenant Worthington had left two children, Paulina and her brother, who was three years older than his sister, totally unprovided for. The orphans, however, were brought up by their maternal great uncle, who had supplied, as far as lay in his power, the loss of

their parents, for their mother had soon followed her husband to the grave.

By the influence of Colonel Melville, George Worthington had received an appointment as midshipman in the Royal Navy, and was, at the time our tale commences, serving as a mate on board a frigate stationed on the coast of South America.

Since the death of her father, Paulina had never quitted the roof of her uncle, Colonel Melville, who was possessed of an independent fortune, in addition to being in the receipt of a pension from the East India Company.

The life of the young girl had hitherto glided peaceably along; she had received an excellent education, for which she was indeed much indebted to the exertions and counsels of the Rev. Mr Pearson, the worthy clergyman of the parish, who, being

an elegant and accomplished scholar himself, had taken a pleasure in superintending those points in her education which it would have been otherwise difficult to render perfect in a distant country town such as Longmoor.

Colonel Melville, although somewhat advanced in years, was apparently in the enjoyment of excellent health, when he was one evening suddenly seized with a fit of apoplexy, and died a few hours afterwards, without having been once restored to a state of consciousness.

On examining his papers it was discovered that his whole fortune consisted of about thirty thousand pounds, lately intrusted, for the purpose of being invested in the funds, to a Mr Macpherson, an eminent London attorney and a solicitor of the Court of Chancery, who was appointed by the Colonel's will guardian to Paulina,

she being only nineteen years of age at the time of her relative's decease. Colonel Melville, it must be observed, had left the whole of his property to be equally divided between the brother and sister.

It was to the house of her guardian that Paulina was proceeding, Mr and Mrs Macpherson having been previously apprized by letter of the time of her intended arrival.

We will not give any lengthened details of the progress of the York Union on its way to the metropolis, there having occurred nothing particularly remarkable to distinguish the journey from any other. The graziers on the top of the coach were continually engaged in striking their hands and feet together, and it must be avowed that they were more than once overheard to give utterance to an energetic monosyllable, which, had it been pronounced in the

presence of a magistrate, might have called forth a pecuniary fine from the pockets of the stout North-countrymen, who at every stoppage did all in their power to give some warmth to their bodies, by imbibing enormous quantities of Mr Smithers's favourite beverage, hot with.

During the night's journey the inside passengers were left to their undisturbed repose, for Mr Cockle, being overcome by the drowsy god, allowed his tongue a rest, and did not give vent to a single quotation, until after the coach had stopped for the passengers to breakfast on the following morning; when it must be owned that during the discussion of that meal his speech and manner appeared at first so extraordinary to the young girl, that for a time she believed the young man to be labouring under an attack of temporary derangement, and could not help experienc-

ing some alarm. On perceiving, however, that none of the other travellers showed any signs of fear, and having, besides, remarked the good-humoured expression of the comedian's countenance, her incipient feeling of fright ceased, and she even began to be somewhat amused by the innumerable quotations that issued from his lips. Indeed, it seemed impossible for the comedian to speak on any subject, for any length of time, without interlarding his discourse with scraps from Shakespeare, or the 'Immortal Will,' as he ever denominated the great dramatic poet.

Just before the time arrived for resuming the journey, the guard entered and whispered a few words in Mr Cockle's ear.

"Here's a go, Pops," said the young man, taking his companion aside; "it appears that we are to take up another fare

here, so one of us will have to mizzle back to the outside."

"What can't be cured must be endured," returned Mr Pops; "it's lucky that the night work is over, so you won't find it so cold outside."

"What do you mean by saying *you* won't find it so cold?" exclaimed Mr Cockle, somewhat sharply; "do you mean to infer that I am to be the victim? That's not quite the ticket, fair play's a jewel. We will have a toss for the vacant inside place."

And with these words he took a shilling from his pocket.

"The best out of three, then," suggested his friend.

"Done," returned the other, "the winner to have his choice of inside or outside. Here goes!"

And he tossed the coin into the air.

"Heads!" cried Mr Pops.

And heads it was.

The second throw, however, was won by Mr Cockle, who was also successful on the shilling being thrown up a third time.

“Bravo!” he cried triumphantly, “I’ve got the inside place, but don’t be cast down, old boy; although ‘the wind bites sharp, and it is very cold,’ the sun is shining, and what a comfort that ought to be to your feelings!”

“You have always the best of it,” observed the other, discontentedly, “what luck you have!”

“It was only even chances,” said Mr Cockle; “had you called tails the last throw instead of heads, you would have won instead of losing—

‘Slave, I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will stand the hazard of the die’ —

the more willingly,” he added apart, “as

in this case, Fortune has not acted scurvily towards me."

The travellers were at this moment informed that the coach was ready to start, and hastened to take their seats, Mr Pops feeling the most unmitigated disgust as he got upon the outside, instead of into the far more comfortable inside of the vehicle.

"What a regular lucky chap it is," he muttered, as he seated himself by the side of the two graziers, "he always has the best of it, both on and off the boards; why, at our last performance at Leeds, when my name was in large capitals at the top of the bill, 'SHYLOCK, MR MONTGOMERY POPS,' and I expected to carry it all my own way, I had the pleasure of having several of my best hits passed over almost unnoticed, while he had only to open his mouth, as Gratiano, to get three rounds of applause. Then his last benefit was nearly a bumper,

‘Casts pearls before swine?’

I must, however, in candour confess that my pretty Desdemona in the opposite corner looks anything but like a pig; what a slap-up creature, to be sure, just cut out for a Rosalind!

‘From the East to Western Ind
No jewel is like Rosalind;
Her worth being mounted on the wind,
Through all the world bears Rosalind.
All the pictures—fairest—lined
Are but black to Ros—Ros—a—a—lind.’”

Here the accomplished reciter of quotations began to drop off in his turn, and before long was joining in the very nasal chorus that had so lately aroused his indignation.

There was one outside passenger, however, who had not closed his eyes since the coach had left the “Piebald Horse,” and that was the man addressed by the name

of Dyson by the young nobleman, who had professed himself such a fervent admirer of Paulina Worthington's charms. The wily servant, whose general rule it was to make friends with everybody, had been wide awake the whole time that he had occupied the seat on the box by the side of the coachman, or rather coachmen, the driver who had handled the reins at the commencement of our story having been replaced early in the morning by a brother Jehu. Both of the coachmen, however, were equally delighted by the conversational powers shown by their neighbour, and pronounced his knowledge of horse-flesh to be first rate. Indeed, while the passengers were breakfasting, the driver then on duty had informed the guard that he had never sat by a more agreeable gentleman during the whole course of his coach career.

"Why, you'd think he'd been born in a stable," he observed; "he knows all the points of a horse better than me myself, I suspect he must be a wettrinee."

Mr Dyson had also rendered himself equally popular with the two graziers, by discussing cattle and sheep with a most perfect knowledge of the question; and he also astonished Mr Montgomery Pops by his intimate acquaintance with everything relating to theatrical matters.

During a short absence of the popular man, while the coach was changing horses at a roadside inn, the coachman proved his great appreciation by actually waiting several minutes for him, without expressing any dissatisfaction at the delay. During the stoppage Mr Dyson's merits were freely discussed, when the coachman expressed the same opinion as to the profession of the absent man as he had already given to

the guard; namely, that he was a wet-trinee, while the graziers strongly asserted him to be a grazier; Mr Montgomery Pops, however, swore that he must be either a dramatic artist or a theatrical manager; but all united in pronouncing him to be a regular trump. The discussion was brought to a close by the return of its object, when on his apologizing for his having unintentionally made them wait, the coachman actually told him that there was no harm done, as the coach was a few minutes before time. A greater proof of the popularity of the versatile traveller it would have been in vain to expect.

The inside passengers were so much refreshed and so completely awake after the coach had stopped for them to dine, that, on their resuming their journey, Mr Cockle found his conversational powers much more appreciated than during the morning, and

actually told several anecdotes without experiencing the annoyance of seeing his auditors drop asleep; but, on the contrary, he had the satisfaction of perceiving that he was listened to, and at length having told a story about an artist's being so thoroughly reduced to despair that he had cut his throat, the Frenchman proceeded to remark that there was no position in life in which either man or woman ought to give themselves up to such a feeling.

"If I were not afraid of boring you," he observed, with a very slight foreign accent, "I could relate an anecdote which proves the truth of my assertion."

A general assurance was immediately made, that, so far from boring his fellow-travellers, he would afford them infinite satisfaction.

"The chief merit of my tale consists

in its not being a long one," said the Frenchman.

"Brevity is the soul of wit," remarked Mr Cockle.

"In that case my story must be full of wit," exclaimed the foreigner, "but to proceed: I will call it by the title of *NIL DESPERANDUM*. I beg pardon for giving utterance to Latin in the presence of a lady," he continued, bowing gracefully to Paulina, "I ought to have said, *NEVER DESPAIR*."

CHAPTER III.

The Frenchman's tale, showing that to whatever state a man may be reduced he should never despair.

“ALTHOUGH you see me in a rather humble position of life,” began the Frenchman, “I am descended from a noble Breton family, which, before the epoch of the great Revolution, held an elevated place among the nobility of Nantes. My grandfather had a splendid private hotel in the best quarter of that city, and lived in the magnificent style usual to a *Grand Seigneur* in those days; his hospitality was remark-

able even in a country noted for its hospitality, and the name of the Marquis de Maravaux was one of the most respected in the land.

“ Well ! the great Revolution broke out, and desolated the fair kingdom of France from north to south and from east to west, when one morning an immense mob surrounded my grandfather’s hotel crying out, ‘ *Down with the aristocrat,* ’ until they were hoarse. Nothing daunted, the Marquis went out to them, but on opening the door, he was pelted with stale cabbages and other not very odoriferous missiles ; he was, however, a brave man, and one not to be intimidated by threats and imprecations ; so there the fine old gentleman stood, with his arms crossed, and with a proud, undaunted air, as if he wished it to be understood that, if he could make himself heard, he would have said :

“ ‘My good fellows, when you are tired perhaps you will let me speak.’

“ Frenchmen have always admired true courage, and the ringleaders of the mob, having managed to procure silence, proceeded to ask several very pointed questions of my grandfather.

“ ‘Hast thou aught to say against the Revolution?’ they inquired.

“ ‘Nothing whatever,’ returned my grandfather; ‘Frenchmen are certainly free to act as they choose.’

“ This answer was well received by the mob, who cried out, ‘Bravo!’

“ ‘Art thou an enemy to the people?’ was the next question.

“ ‘An enemy to the people! not I,’ cried the Marquis, ‘God bless them!’

“ Rapturous applause, and a general cry of ‘*Vive le cidevant*.’

“ ‘Art thou ready to cry, Liberty,

Equality, Fraternity, or Death?' asked the ring-leaders.

"'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or Death,' cried my grandfather, as glibly as though he had been accustomed to cry out nothing else all his life,—'or the devil,' he added, mentally, and fortunately too, as the last expression might not have been well received.'

"Another burst of enthusiasm from the unwashed.

"'What proof canst thou give of thy being a friend to the Nation?' continued the examiner, who was evidently of a matter-of-fact disposition.

"'Every possible proof that lies in my power,' said the Marquis; 'firstly, my house is at your service, and if you will all do me the honour of walking in, my kitchen and cellar are at your disposal, and though I am not fond of boasting, I must observe

that I defy you to find better wine in the whole of France than what I have in my cellars,—may I hope therefore to have the pleasure of your company?’

“Applause even more rapturous than before rent the air at this proposition, and in a few minutes the hotel was full of guests, such as it had never seen before, and the finest wines from Burgundy, Bordeaux, and Champagne went down throats that up to that moment had never tasted of such drinks, and before long my grandfather had had his hands shaken by some scores of very dirty hands, the proprietors of which asserted with one voice that the *cidevant* Marquis de Maravaux was a tramp of the first water and no friend to Pitt or Coburg, and that if any one dared to assert the contrary he should be made to eat his words.

“After a while the hotel was cleared

of the rabble, and my grandfather was able to go into his bed-room and wash his hands.

“My ancestor was a man of very good common sense, and came to the not very mistaken conclusion that, were he to remain at Nantes, he might have the honour of receiving other visits, which might not terminate in so satisfactory a manner as the one he had already received. So the very next day, having placed himself with my grandmother and my father (then a boy) in his landau, he took a journey to Paris, where he hired a small apartment, and procured a *carte de civisme*, being determined not to emigrate till the very last extremity. For a time he lived unmolested by the *sans culottes*, but one unlucky day he was arrested on the charge of being in correspondence with emigrants; the ground of accusation being that he

had received a letter from an old friend who had emigrated to London. In vain did my grandfather observe before the Tribunal that he could not help any one writing to him, and that it was rather a stretch of the law to call receiving a letter which he had never intended to answer holding correspondence. It was in vain that he asserted his innocence, for the fine old gentleman was found guilty and condemned to be guillotined, and that very afternoon he was driven off in a cart, together with some thirty other unfortunate individuals (all of them being tightly pinioned, and having had their hair closely cropped), to the *Place de la Revolution* for the purpose of saluting the statue of Liberty, by sneezing into a basket,—such being the slang term of the epoch for a man's having his head chopped off by the guillotine."

"And did your grandfather continue to say 'NIL DESPERANDUM?'" interrupted Mr Cockle. "I cannot help thinking that it was hardly the moment for him to cry out 'Never say die.'"

"He did not completely despair," continued the Frenchman, "although it must be confessed that there was very little hope of his ever again walking the streets with his head upon his shoulders. Well! you must know that all this was happening at a season of the year when the Northern Hemisphere was in what is termed 'the short days,' and some delay took place before the carts reached the place where the guillotine stood in sombre majesty, and when they got to their journey's end it appeared that there was something out of order in the mechanism of the machine, and it took some time to set it to rights, so that when the head-chopping began it was

nearly quite dark. Perhaps you are not aware that those condemned to die during the Reign of Terror were always placed beneath the platform of the guillotine, waiting for their turn to be operated upon, and a pretty crowd they made that evening. Suddenly a bright thought came into my grandfather's head. 'Why should I not try to hide myself?' he mentally ejaculated; 'if the worst should come to the worst, I can only be guillotined after all.'

"It was, as I have already observed, getting very dark, so that the old gentleman had no difficulty in creeping, unobserved, under some straw that was heaped up beneath the platform. His position could not have been denominated comfortable, as he heard the knife of the guillotine go 'chop, chop, chop,' every minute, but he kept up his courage notwithstanding, and prayed to Heaven very earnestly.

“Now it so happened that the executioners had so much work on their hands that they did not keep a very good account of the number of persons to be guillotined, for after a time they stopped, swabbed up the blood, and took their departure, upon which the mob dispersed, without any one inquiring after my grandfather.

“When all had been still for some time, the old gentleman got quietly out of his hiding-place, and looked about him to see whether the coast was clear, and as there was no one near he determined to get away from the spot as soon as possible. The greatest difficulty, however, of the case was, that he was in his shirt sleeves, with his hands tied tightly behind his back and his hair cut close. It was in vain that he tried to get his arms free, the fellows who had pinioned him were far too well accustomed to the job not to have done it in a most business-

like way, so my grandfather was obliged to set off on his walk in a very disagreeable manner. Fortunately it was quite dark by this time, and as the Marquis carefully avoided going near any of the lamps, no one noticed the decidedly unusual appearance of a gentleman taking a stroll on a cold winter's night in his shirt-sleeves, with no hat upon his head, his hair cropped close, and his arms tied behind his back.

“Putting as good a face as possible upon the matter, my grandfather walked quietly on, till he got among the trees of the Champs Elysées, behind one of which he concealed himself, as a lamp being opposite, it enabled him to see every one who passed. He was determined to put the science of physiognomy to the proof, and to accost the proprietor of the first face the expression of which should please him. For,

said he to himself, nature is generally honest, and most living beings wear the impression of their characters on their faces.

The Marquis remained at his post for some time, till at length an elderly man, with a frank, bluff countenance, came by, humming a gay air; he was well dressed, and appeared to be what is called a jolly good fellow.

“My grandfather felt that there was no misprint there in that open book of nature, and that he might wait till morning before having another chance of meeting with such a face, so he decided upon accosting the stranger at once.

“‘I beg your pardon, sir,’ he said, coming forward and placing himself in front of the other, ‘might I speak a word to you?’

“The new-comer started, and very naturally too, for the light fell full upon my grandfather’s face and figure, and it must

be owned that the *cidevant* Marquis's personal appearance was anything but respectable at the moment.

“ ‘Pray do not be alarmed, sir,’ continued my grandfather, ‘I must inform you that some friends of mine have been amusing themselves at my expense, and having taken away my coat and hat, and tied my hands behind my back, they have actually left me in this very extraordinary state,—a very poor practical joke, to be sure. Might I request you to cut the cord that prevents me using my hand?’ ”

“ ‘Why, your friends have treated you as badly as the executioners treat those condemned to be guillotined,’ replied the stranger, with an accent that showed he did not give the most implicit credence to the story.

“ My grandfather felt very uncomfort-

able, and for the first time in his life felt inclined to despair.

“ ‘ You have escaped from the guillotine ? ’ added the stranger, ‘ there is no use in denying it. Surely your friends, as you call them, would scarcely have presumed to carry the joke so far as to cut your hair so close. Fear nothing however, I am no *sans culotte*, and will do what I can to help you out of the scrape. ’

“ With these words he took a knife from his pocket and cut the cords with which the Marquis’s hands were tied.

“ ‘ And now, ’ he said, as soon as that job was finished, ‘ you must cover those shirt-sleeves with all expedition. ’

“ And taking off his cloak he threw it over the other’s shoulders.

“ ‘ I have no hat to give you, ’ he continued, ‘ but I have a red night-cap in my pocket, and that is more in the fashion of

the day than anything else. Now give me your arm,' he proceeded, as soon as my grandfather had put on the Phrygian head-dress, 'and let us leave this place; you can tell me your story as we walk along.'

"My worthy ancestor's trust in the science of physiognomy had not misled him; indeed, were a little more attention paid to its study it would be no loss of time. In the present instance, it appeared that my grandfather had fallen upon a staunch Royalist; the good man conducted him to his own lodgings, and leaving him there proceeded to his *protégé's* house, where he informed the Marquise of her husband's extraordinary escape, and, to cut my story short, he managed so well for his new friends, that before ten days had elapsed my grandfather and grandmother, accompanied by their son (my father), had put their feet upon the hospitable soil of Eng-

land, where they remained until they could return to France without danger."

"Your grandfather," observed the original inside passenger, as soon as the Frenchman had brought his narrative to a conclusion, "had good reason to say, 'Never despair;' but allow me to ask you, Monsieur, how it was that, when the bill was passed to indemnify the emigrants for the loss of their estates, your grandfather did not get his share, as I presume was the case, otherwise you would be, in all probability, in a better position of fortune than you appear to be?"

"Oh! as to that matter," returned the foreigner, "when the Bourbons afterwards caused the bill of indemnity to be voted, my grandfather, who was then in America, got his full share, but unfortunately after his decease my father lost nearly all he was possessed of in a bad speculation, and was

never able to retrieve his affairs before his death, and thus it happens that the sole representative of the ancient family of Maravaux is now nothing more than a commercial traveller. Still I do not despair of being able sooner or later to re-occupy my proper station in society."

"Now I think of it, sir," observed Mr Cockle, in a tone of great respect, "you have a right to the title of Marquis."

"Well, I believe I have," said the Frenchman, in a careless tone, "but I see no use in assuming it; for in my opinion when a man bears the title of Marquis before his name, he ought to be possessed of carriages, horses, and estates, and not be reduced to earn his living by going about the country getting orders."

"You take the thing coolly," said Cockle.

"What would be the use of doing otherwise?" observed the other; "this life

is short, enjoy it as well as you can, that is my motto."

"And *nil desperandum*," added the comedian.

"And *nil desperandum*," continued De Maravaux, "I do not despair of making my fortune yet; I am still in the prime of life, have received a good education, and am in the enjoyment of excellent health and spirits; besides, I have a natural turn for business, so it will be my own fault if I do not manage to make my way in the world."

"It is nevertheless very difficult," observed the original inside passenger, "to get on in life, without a helping hand being held out to you."

"Less so than is generally imagined," replied the Frenchman; "for my part, I feel convinced that, sooner or later, unremitting perseverance is sure to make its

way; depend upon it that when you hear a man complaining of his genius being ignored, it is owing either to his genius not being of such a first-rate quality as he chooses to suppose, or, what is oftener the case, to his wanting those stepping-stones to success — patience and perseverance. Let a man be but patient and persevering, and he will not find himself last in the race of life."

CHAPTER IV.

The York Union reaches London—Mr Macpherson is called upon, but is absent from home—Mr Rimsdale resolves upon a bold deed.

It was past eight o'clock in the evening following its departure from Longmoor, when the York Union deposited its passengers at the George and Boar, Holborn, where Miss Worthington discovered, greatly to her astonishment, that there was no one waiting for her. Mr Rimsdale, however, having learned from the young girl in what street Mr Macpherson's residence

was situated, kindly proposed to accompany her as far as her guardian's house. Paulina thankfully availed herself of the offer, and after having received a most Shakespearian farewell from Mr Cockle, Mr Rimsdale and herself drove off in a hackney-coach, behind which Dyson, the nobleman's servant, had placed himself without being perceived.

After a long drive the coach pulled up before a dark brick mansion, which the driver informed his fares was the house to which he had been directed to proceed, and having received orders to knock and ring, he did so in the manner usual to hack-charioteers, by giving the door a series of loud knocks and the bell a furious tug.

Several minutes elapsed, and there was no answer to the summons.

"Ring again, coachman," said Mr Rims-

dale, "perhaps they have not heard the last."

"Dang it," cried the Jarvey, giving another desperate tug at the bell and a tremendous shower of knocks at the door, "dang it, if so be as them as lives here harn't a-heard, they'd better get a horder of hadmittance to the deaf and dumb hasylum; for may I be whopped if I didn't a hear the bell a-tingling right through the horifice, but here goes!"

With these words he continued to rattle away at the knocker, but without any apparent success attending his efforts, although the noise he made caused sundry heads to be thrust forth from the windows, of the adjacent houses, and set more than one street cur howling most piteously.

"Coachman," at length exclaimed the gentleman, "I really begin to think you must have mistaken the number of the

house, for it is quite evident to me that no one lives here."

"If there be's any mistake," responded the driver, "it must be on your side, sir; for you tell'd me to go to No. 29, and here be No. 29 on the door, as large as life."

"Are you quite sure, Miss Worthington," asked her companion, "that 29 is the No. of Mr Macpherson's residence?"

"Quite, sir," replied Paulina; "I have frequently seen letters from the gentleman, and they have all been so headed, as well as the one addressed to myself the other day, which was written in reply to that sent to inform him of my coming."

"This, then, is a most extraordinary circumstance," ejaculated the gentleman.

"Coachman, try once more."

The person addressed immediately commenced a fresh clatter upon the door; long and heavily did he knock, loudly and

strenuously did he ring, but all in vain, no one answered the energetic summons.

"Upon my honour, this is very disagreeable," exclaimed Mr Rimsdale; "I really begin to fear there is a mistake somewhere; it is quite plain that there is no one in the house, for I cannot perceive the slightest glimmer of light through the chinks of the closed shutters, and even the area below is quite dark."

"Well, sir!" interrupted the hackney-coachman, "what do you propose doing? If I might make so bold, I'd recommend some alteration in our principles; still, if you be so minded, I'll knock and ring till to-morrow morning."

"Are there no means of ascertaining anything about the inmates of this house?" inquired Mr Rimsdale, impatiently. "By the by, coachman, there's a grocer's shop nearly opposite, go, my good man, and in-

quire whether they know anything concerning the movements of Mr Macpherson of No. 29."

The driver proceeded to obey the injunction, and on returning, informed Mr Rimsdale that he had learned that Mr Macpherson had left his house on the previous day, leaving the establishment in the sole charge of an elderly man-servant, whose duty was to remain in the house and answer calls, but that the well-known propensities of the man had, in all probability, conducted him to the sign of the "Spotted Dog," at the corner of the street.

Thither the driver was at once ordered to proceed; and having pulled up at a public-house, with a sign before it, representing a nondescript animal daubed with black spots, Mr Rimsdale, leaving Paulina in the coach, proceeded to enter the bar,

and inquire whether Mr Macpherson's servant was within. In answer to the question, the bar-maid pointed to a door with two circular holes, filled with glass in its upper panels, and the gentleman, following the pantomimic direction, found himself in a room with a sanded floor, lighted up by an oil lamp, and occupied by several persons of the lower order, who were engaged in smoking and drinking. In the further corner was seated an elderly man, who appeared to be far gone in a state of maudlin intoxication, and who was evidently deluding himself with the idea that he was entertaining the company present by the scarcely audible manner in which he was humming a sentimental melody.

"Is Mr Macpherson's servant here?" inquired Mr Rimsdale, as he entered.

"Who calls me?" hiccupped the old man; "is the house a-fire?"

"I want to know where Mr Macpherson is gone to?" returned the gentleman.

At this question the drunken domestic gave a grave, consequential nod with his head, at the same time screwing up his mouth after the manner of people in the state he then was.

"Mr Macpherson's a genelman," he observed.

"I do not in the least doubt that circumstance," answered Mr Rimsdale, scarcely able to repress a smile at the drunken dignity of the man, "but I wish you to let me know where he is at the present moment."

"What do you want to know for?" said the old man, sulkily.

"That is nothing to you," exclaimed the gentleman, getting angry; "you are his servant, I understand, and ought to

understand your duty better than to answer in such a manner ; once more I ask, where has your master gone to, and when is he expected back ?”

“ Not knowing can’t tell,” was the sole answer vouchsafed.

“ Come, sir, no trifling,” cried Mr Rimsdale, sternly ; “ there is a young lady just arrived from the country, at the invitation of your master, and on knocking at the door she finds nobody at home.”

“ Most probably not,” said the old man ; “ I should be rather surprised if so be she did, seeing I’m alone there, or rather ought to be, hadn’t I come here to pass the evening for company’s sake.”

“ This is too bad,” ejaculated the other, “ there is no making anything out of the drunken fellow. Is there any one here,” he continued, looking round, “ who can

give me some information concerning Mr Macpherson, the gentleman who lives at No. 29 ?”

At this question several of those present rose from their seats, and informed Mr Rimsdale that they understood that the gentleman inquired after had quitted town rather suddenly, and without naming any day for his return.

“Can any one make that old man understand,” continued Mr Rimsdale, after having thanked those who had spoken, “that there is a young lady just arrived from the North of England, and who is waiting outside in a hackney-coach? Pray ask him whether any orders have been left concerning her ?”

“I say, old Cooper,” said a man in a fustian jacket, taking upon himself the office of interpreter, “did your master say anything about any one coming ?”

"Yes," was the concise answer.

"Well, then! what was it? Come, out with it, as the old lady said to the child vot vas chewing a pin."

"Why, master said as how, says he, that when the charwoman com'd, she was to be told she wasn't wanted any more."

"But, did he mention as how he expected a young lady?"

"Not he; if he had talked about expecting any young ladies his missus would a kicked up a precious row, that she would."

"I see there is some mistake here," exclaimed Mr Rimsdale, as he turned to leave the room, "what is to be done?"

"By your leave, sir," said the proprietor of the fustian jacket, following Mr Rimsdale to the door, and speaking in a very civil tone, "by your leave, it be my

private impression that all isn't right about Mr Macfussun."

"How so, my good man?" inquired the other.

"Why, I've heard it said as how—people will talk, you know—as how he's smashed."

"Smashed! how?" echoed Mr Rimsdale, anxiously.

"Why, stumped up, to be sure; not got the rhino to meet the constable with."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the other. "I have always been told that he was a man of large fortune, and enjoying a first-rate business."

"So I thought myself," answered the man, "and so thought every one. I've done many a job at his house, in the carpenteering line, and finely furnished it were too, number one and no mistake; he

always went a pace, that he did, and turned out right dapper."

"Have you any grounds for your suspicions?" inquired the gentleman, "that is, what reason have you for supposing Mr Macpherson to be ruined?"

"Because he's gone in a hurry, and forgotten to leave his address; besides, he's said nothing about his coming back again."

"Still your suspicions may turn out incorrect," observed Mr Rimsdale; "have you any idea as to where he is gone?"

"Why," answered the man, "if you wish to have my private and particular opinion, it is that Mr Macpherson has cut his lucky, over the water, to Merika."

"To America!" ejaculated Mr Rimsdale, in a tone of voice expressive of his feelings of disappointment, "to America?"

"Yes, sir, to Merika," said the car-

penter, "that be the place as those travels to who be too much sought after on this side of the water; what a set of infernal vagabonds there must be over there! Let us see, there be Joe Priggins, as broke into the chandler's shop; there's Jack Classer, as emptied his master's till into his own pocket; there's Tim Block, alias Young Foxy, as—"

Mr Rimsdale did not stay to hear any further account of the travels and proceedings of Messrs Priggins, Classer, and Co., but, giving his informant a shilling, he hastily left the passage in which the conference had taken place, and returned to the hackney-coach.

"Look ye, Dick," said the carpenter to a friend on his return to his seat in the parlour, "that's a jolly chap, although I do believe he be a Bow-street runner."

"No, do you?" replied the other; "well,

it may be so; and now I think of it, I rather fancies as how he has the cut of a hoffer.

"Then, I warrant it's all true about them Macfussuns," said the carpenter; "Cooper, old boy, they're coming after your governor."

"Let 'em come," returned Cooper; then, as if all such matters were beneath his notice, he took a long draught at his pot of gin-pearl, and leaning back against the wall, became insensible to the cares of this world by dropping into a sound sleep.

In the mean while Mr Rimsdale, having returned to the hackey-coach, proceeded to inform Miss Worthington of the sudden and unaccountable departure of her guardian and his family; suppressing, however, all mention of the melancholy surmises the event had raised in his own and other minds.

Paulina was overwhelmed at receiving such unexpected intelligence, and was for a moment nearly stupefied with astonishment; but, quickly recovering herself, she entreated her fellow-traveller to direct her to some inn where she might pass the night, and be no longer the cause of any further trouble to him.

“My dear young lady, that can never be,” cried Mr Rimsdale with energy, “young, inexperienced, and a stranger to London, as you are. By all that’s powerful,” he added to himself, “this is a most painful affair; it would be the height of inhumanity to leave this poor girl to shift for herself; I would take her indeed to my own house, but—”

The ‘but’ had evidently a deep signification, and there was certainly some mysterious power damping the generous impulse of the kind-hearted gentleman

which prompted him to offer hospitality to his young companion.

"Surely," remarked Paulina, "there cannot be any great harm incurred by my remaining at an inn for one night, and to-morrow I can make inquiries concerning my friends."

"Her friends, poor girl!" muttered her companion; "would she were older or less beautiful, but lovely as she is, what will Mrs Rimsdale say?"

The secret was out, the mysterious obstacle which impeded the ready flow of the traveller's hospitable feelings was Mrs Rimsdale.

"They will certainly have left a letter for me," continued Paulina, "which I shall get to-morrow on my calling at my guardian's house."

"No, no, my dear young lady," exclaimed her companion, in a somewhat

desperate tone, "I cannot possibly leave you in such a position. I am a householder and a married man, allow me to offer you the shelter of my roof until you shall have learned something positive about the movements of Mr Macpherson."

"Thank you, sir, you are most kind," returned Paulina, "but I am afraid that I shall be trespassing too much on your goodness?"

"By no means, my dear Miss Worthington," replied the other; "however," he continued, hesitatingly, "do not be—I mean—that is—I trust you will not take it ill should Mrs Rimsdale just at first—that is—nothing—the fact is—Mrs Rimsdale is a most excellent woman, a most inestimable woman—such a heart—but she is apt, you see—she is apt to think—that is—to take odd fancies into her head, that is, she sometimes—the fact is—she

is rather of an irritable disposition, and may—perhaps—say—but never mind, it will all come right in the end, I trust.”

These last words were uttered in rather a faltering tone.

“But really, sir,” observed Paulina, “I could not think for a single moment of being the cause of any dispute arising between yourself and Mrs Rimsdale; pray suffer me to proceed at once to an inn.”

“I should deserve to be hanged if I allowed such a thing to happen,” exclaimed Mr Rimsdale, vehemently; “come, my dear young lady, no excuses; I am surely master in our house.”

“Well,” returned Miss Worthington, “if I can accept of your kind offer without incommoding you, I shall be most truly grateful.”

“Do not talk to me of gratitude,” said her companion, “I am merely doing

what any other in my place would do; besides which, I have no doubt Mrs Rimsdale will be delighted at making your acquaintance,—if not,” he added to himself, “I’ll exert the prerogative of a husband, and make her.”

Buttoning up his coat with a determined air as he gave utterance to this firm resolve, he bade the coachman drive to the street in which he lived.

Are we right in avowing that, as the distance between the “Spotted Dog” and his own house diminished, so gradually did the courage ooze out of Mr Rimsdale’s bosom? It was in vain that he conned over and over again the duty of obedience owed by wives to their husbands, and sworn by them at the altar,—the recollection of sundry unpleasant passages in the history of Mrs Rimsdale’s temper would obtrude itself upon his memory and

cause an involuntary palpitation of his heart.

"By all that's powerful," he muttered, as the coach drew up at his door, "I wish it were over."

There were whole volumes contained in that one little word *it*.

"Egad! they've led me a round-about journey, what with knocking and ringing at different places," said a man, getting down from behind the hackney-coach, as soon as the door of the house was closed upon Paulina and her fellow-traveller; "there's one comfort, however, and that is, that I have done my business first-rate, and my lord can't find no fault no how with my management, and how should he be dissatisfied, I should just like to know? Wasn't I five years *valley-de-sham* to Lord Fitz Royal, as was Ambassador at

Vieny ? I rather do think I knows a trick or two in 'plomacy."

Having uttered these words, or, to speak more correctly, having thought them, Mr Dyson, the nobleman's servant who had left the "Piebald Horse" by the York Union, and made himself so generally popular with his fellow-travellers, and who had got behind the hackney-coach as it left the George and Blue Boar,—Mr Dyson hailed the coachman as he was about to drive off, and, getting inside, bade the man proceed to Berkeley Square.

CHAPTER V.

A conversation takes place at Mr Macpherson's Offices, by which it appears that there is little likelihood of that gentleman turning up for some time to come.

“WELL, Thornton, what's your opinion of the case? My private and particular idea is that the governor is regularly stumped.”

“Stumped! nothing of the kind. I'd lay my life to an uncertified bankrupt's assets, that old Macpherson was never better off in his life. He must have scraped together some pretty pickings before he bolted.”

"In that case he might have had the heart to pay us our salaries, for I have got an idea that the sale of the effects he has left behind won't even cover the expenses of the inquiry."

"That's the worst part of the business, the leaving of his clerks to shift for themselves; as for the other sufferers, they hadn't worked for their money with the sweat of their brows, or rather their fingers; a set of lazy drones many of them, who wanted a higher interest for their money than they could get in the Government funds; serves them right for being so grasping."

"What do you calculate to be the figure of what the governor has bolted with?"

"Upwards of fifty thousand pounds, as sure as my name is John Thornton; what a glorious game he must have

played to have got the handling of such a sum."

"And to where do you think he has really gone?"

"Why, some say to America, others to Constantinople, to set up a harem perhaps, in opposition to the Grand Turk; others think he has bolted to New South Wales, to save the Government the expense of paying his passage out; for my part I opine for America. As for his going to Constantinople, the notion is absurd, as his wife has gone with him, and she'd hardly stand such a thing as his setting up a harem. By Jove, he must have managed the affair not only very dapperly, but very quietly, for although he started the day before yesterday, it was only yesterday evening that people began to talk about its being a bolt; indeed, I was taken quite aback when Dick Bayning mentioned the fact last night at the weekly

meeting of the Sons of Bellona. That fellow always gets to know the first of everything."

"Is he not on a paper?"

"So I have been told; however, be that as it may, he is out and out the jolliest president the Sons of Bellona ever had,—in fact, the club was never in such a prosperous state as at present."

"But to think of ourselves, what good can there be in staying here? I propose we mizzle."

"I put my decided negative to that article, it would be anything but politic; for if we quit our posts without receiving proper notice from the trustees that will be appointed, we should miss the chance of getting our last quarter's salaries, in case, some how or other, a dividend should turn up."

"I can't help thinking that the rhino

will prove *non est inventus*, like the governor; still, as you think it better to do so, I'll run the chance and stick to the office to the last."

"Not many writs to make out to-day, I expect."

"Not one, the sheriff's officers will have a holiday of it, until further orders, as far as our governor is concerned; they cannot complain, however, for we have given them plenty of business in our time. There's old Levy of Newman Street told me, confidentially, the other day, that he made a better thing out of the *capias's* issued by the firm of Macpherson and Co. than from those issued by any other attorney's office in Westminster or the City; but here comes Mr Smith, he ought to know how matters stand, for he was very thick with the governor; I have an idea that he don't think such treble X of him as he used."

The above conversation took place in the outer office of the firm of Macpherson and Co., in Gray's Inn, the morning after Paulina's arrival in London. From the remarks made by the two speakers, who were junior clerks of the establishment, it was evident that the man in the fustian jacket who had spoken to Mr Rimsdale at the "Spotted Dog" was not far wrong in his surmises, and that the attorney was in all probability at that moment on his passage out to the United States, or to some other distant land, having forgotten, before starting, to refund the large sums of money intrusted to his charge by a number of confiding clients.

On the entrance of the new-comer, who was the senior clerk of the firm, he was addressed by his two juniors in a much more familiar style than usual.

"Well! Mr Smith," inquired the Son

of Bellona, "I suppose it's a case of no go?"

"To say the truth," returned the senior clerk, "there's no writ of error to be got out of that observation of yours, for Mr Macpherson is not to be found. His house in Orwell Street has been left in charge of that old drunken sot, Cooper, who will have to give up possession to-day, as it appears that the lease and furniture have long since been disposed of by private contract, so that the creditors will have no claim upon them."

"But our salaries," cried the Son of Bellona, with some emotion, "is there any hope of their being paid?"

"I am afraid not," returned Mr Smith, "for all the tangible or convertible property that remains are the fittings up and furniture of this office, together with some bundles of old papers, to which may be added

the unsettled costs of a few writs, and I am afraid that very little of the proceeds will ever find their way into our pockets."

Mr Smith was fully capable of knowing the truth of this unpleasant assertion, having been cognizant, from the very first, of Mr Macpherson's flight; indeed, to confess the truth, the wily senior clerk had helped his employer to arrange the whole business, taking care to profit largely thereby, so largely, indeed, that it was his private intention to begin to set up on his own account; not, however, before the affair should have somewhat blown over; for Mr Smith was a prudent man, and fond of keeping up appearances.

"Have there been many people here this morning?" he asked, after a few minutes had elapsed.

"We have had exactly five-and-twenty very particular inquiries about the go-

vernor," said the other clerk; "bad news flies fast; some of the questioners' faces looked as long as if their proprietors had just been tapped on the shoulder by Old Levy; and I've an idea there are few things in nature more unpleasant to the feelings than that; but here comes another long face; that makes number twenty-six."

The last remark was made in reference to a gentleman who entered the office at that moment, and addressing himself to the senior clerk, inquired whether there was any truth in the report that had reached his ears of Mr Macpherson having suddenly and unexpectedly left the country.

"I have never had the honour of meeting you before, sir," returned Mr Smith; "so, previously to answering your question, may I ask whether you are a client of the firm?"

“No, sir,” replied the gentleman, “but I am acting for another party, Miss Paulina Worthington, niece to Colonel Melville, lately deceased; you are well acquainted, I presume, with both the names I have mentioned, as by the Colonel’s will Mr Macpherson was appointed guardian to Miss Worthington.”

“I am certainly well acquainted with one of the names you have mentioned, sir,” said Mr Smith, quietly, “that of Colonel Melville; he was one of the largest, if not the largest, creditor of the firm. I am, however, afraid that his heirs will not find much to divide among them.”

“Then it is true that Mr Macpherson has absconded?” exclaimed Mr Rimsdale, for the last comer was no other than that gentleman.

“Absconded ! hum !” returned the

senior clerk, "*non est inventus* is the politer and more cautious term."

"Then poor Paulina Worthington is completely ruined," ejaculated Mr Rimsdale, "and thrown upon the Metropolis without any resources. But allow me to inquire," he continued, "whether there is any chance of a dividend being eventually paid?"

"If such a thing should happen," suggested the Son of Bellona, "it will most probably take place among the free and independent citizens of the United States."

"The villain!" cried Mr Rimsdale, "the rascally villain!"

"I am afraid your words are decidedly actionable, sir," observed the senior clerk meekly; "remember that every man in this enlightened country is considered innocent until found guilty by a jury of his peers."

Several other persons entering at this moment, Mr Rimsdale took his leave, and turned his steps in the direction of his own house.

“How shall I break this sad intelligence to Miss Worthington?” he muttered; “and oh! what shall I say to Mrs Rimsdale?”

CHAPTER VI.

In which Lord Forestdale forms certain plans.

THE sun was shining brightly, or rather would have been shining brightly, had not the misty haze—common even to the most aristocratic quarters of London in the month of January, as, indeed, more or less throughout the year—somewhat intercepted its rays, and it was about eleven o'clock in the morning, when a well-frizzled valet knocked at the door of a room in a large house situated in Berkeley

it was then possible to procure, even in London, liquors and food that were not poisoned by being mixed with noxious compounds.

Having partaken of the soda-water, the Earl of Forestdale—for such was the title of the nobleman—proceeded to rise and make his toilet; then, having breakfasted with a far better appetite than was expected from his late suffering state, he began to peruse, or rather glance over, a large pile of letters which were laid on the table.

“What is this about?” he said to himself, after having cursorily examined the contents of several of the epistles. “Oh! from old Foxdale, requesting me to make another diminution in the amount of his rent. How can he expect me to be such a fool as to accede to such a preposterous request, when he well knows that his farm

is in reality underlet? Anyhow, the affair does not concern me, but my steward, to whom I shall forward the letter, with directions to inform Foxdale that if he considers himself too highly rented, he had better give notice to quit.

“What’s this?” continued the Earl, taking up another letter. “From Stokes, the gamekeeper of Forestdale Manor—caught young Jacob Dale with a gun and his pockets full of game, crossing a field; wishes to know whether he is to proceed against him. Of course; why, Dale’s father voted, after promising the contrary, against the men I put up for the county. Proceed against the fellow?—certainly; What business has an elector, if he chooses to vote against his landlord’s wish, to get himself into a scrape? Now that Dale has been fool enough to let himself be caught tripping he cannot be surprised if he suffer

for it. Proceed against him, of course; although in my heart of hearts I am far from being an advocate for the game laws; indeed, candidly speaking, I wonder the farmers stand them. From William," proceeded the Earl, opening another letter; "his Colonel is about to retire, and he therefore wants me to lodge the purchase-money for his commission. By Jove, he is in luck, that brother of mine—not yet seven-and-twenty, and about to command his regiment, and that too without its having required any interest to push him on; but although it has required no interest, it has cost a power of money. But William is a fine fellow, although somewhat too much of a Puritan, so I do not grudge what I have done for him, and the money for the purchase of his regiment shall be lodged this afternoon. Poor dear William, he is a brother after mine own

heart, and I hope to live long enough to see him become a Field-marshal."

Having perused the contents of various other letters, and come to the end of the pile, Lord Forestdale rang the bell.

"Is Dyson below?" he inquired of the servant who answered the call.

"Yes, my Lord."

"Tell him to come up-stairs immediately."

"Well!" cried the nobleman, as soon as Dyson had entered the room, "what news?"

"Good, my Lord," replied the man, "they could not be better, considering the short time I have been at work."

"Let me see," said Lord Forestdale, "you hired a lodging in the same house as the girl; devilish bright idea that of yours; and at the same time you received *carte*

blanche from me to spare neither expense nor pains."

"And I trust your Lordship will have no reason to be discontented with what I have done," continued Dyson; "for instance, I was no sooner installed in my back attic, than I began to make myself agreeable with the people of the house by doing little things for them. Well, the second day of my stay I saw the servant-girl coming down-stairs with a letter in her hand, which it appeared Miss Worthington had given her to put into the post-office. I immediately offered to carry it myself, pretending that I was going to post a letter of my own. The girl was but too glad to save herself a journey, and jumped at my offer, with many thanks. The letter was directed to the Reverend Mr Pearson, Rector of Longmoor, and I certainly did take it to the post-office, but

not until I had made a copy for your Lordship."

"Capitally managed, Dyson, the difficulty however must have been to get hold of the answer."

"I have just managed that business too, my Lord, for the answer came yesterday, and I have been on the look-out ever since. This morning the young lady went out very early, accompanied by her landlady. The landlord also was absent, so that I took an opportunity of sending off the servant-girl to a distance, and then, the field being clear, I quietly walked into Miss Worthington's room, and opening her desk by means best known to myself, I soon found the letter in question, which, after condoling with her for the loss of her fortune, &c. &c., was to the effect, for I had no time to make a copy, that since she was determined to remain in London and

try to procure a situation as governess or companion, he had enclosed some letters of introduction which would be of use to her, and the writer ended by remarking that should she fail in what she was undertaking, she was to consider his house as hers, and—”

“Never mind the rest,” interrupted the nobleman; “depend upon it the girl will never require the parson’s hospitality, I will take care of that, for Lady Forestdale, my mother, is looking out for a person who can act both as governess and companion to my sister, Lady Clara, and Miss Worthington will just suit for the situation, patronized as she appears to be by the Rector of Longmoor, and having received the education of a lady.”

“You had better then be quick about it, my Lord,” said Dyson, “for Miss Worthington is not over-comfortably situated just

now, for it appears she was recommended to the lodgings by a gentleman with whom she travelled up to London in the York Union, and at whose house she staid the first night of her arrival, after finding that her guardian had bolted. Now the gentleman's wife, as ugly an old creature as ever breathed, is, it appears, of a jealous disposition, and will have it that her husband is sweet upon Miss Worthington, and having found out where the young lady is lodging since she forced her to quit her house—"

"Has set to persecuting her," interrupted his master.

"Exactly so, my Lord," replied the servant, "and is doing all she can to make the place too hot for her; indeed she appears to think that London is not large enough to hold them both."

"The old vixen!" ejaculated the Earl.

“That’s just what all the neighbours call her,” continued Dyson, “for Mrs Rimsdale—”

“Mrs Rimsdale!” interrupted his master, “is she the wife of Rimsdale the notary, who lives in Manners Street?”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Bravo! capital! just the thing,” cried Lord Forestdale, triumphantly, “I know him well, he has often transacted business for me. Order my carriage to be brought to the door immediately, that I may proceed at once to Rimsdale’s and engage Miss Worthington in Lady Forestdale’s name. The affair will be arranged in a few minutes,” he continued, to himself, “and when once she is in my mother’s house it will be very hard if I do not succeed in making the girl understand how conducive to her welfare it will prove, if

she do not refuse to listen to my proposals."

A few days after the above conversation Paulina Worthington was installed in St James's Square in the capacity of governess and companion to Lady Clara Langley, the only daughter of the Dowager Countess of Forestdale.

CHAPTER VII.

Paulina Worthington, having been installed in St James's Square, reads the account of a dreadful event in the Morning Post.

PAULINA had not been long in her new situation before she became almost reconciled to her destiny, for the Dowager Lady Forestdale, although of a cold and haughty disposition, did not forget that the young governess had been born and brought up in a very superior sphere of life to her present one, and in consequence treated her with as much kindness and

affability as her proud nature was capable of. In the mean while Lord Forestdale had been compelled by sudden ill health to proceed to Cheltenham almost immediately after Miss Worthington's installation in his mother's house, so that the execution of the plans he had formed was for a moment suspended. Consequently, as far as she was herself concerned, Paulina was comparatively happy; she could not, however, help feeling much anxiety on account of her brother, whose prospects in life would now be so materially altered, and who, she was aware, was left without any interest to push him forward in his profession.

But although the young girl had found some favour in the eyes of Lady Forestdale, there were others in the house by whom her coming was regarded with eyes of jealous dislike, as will appear from the following conversation which took place in

the housekeeper's room, a few days after Paulina's arrival, between the housekeeper, the two ladies' maids, and the butler.

"Well! Ma'am, what *do* you think of the new governess?" said one of the Abigails—Lady Forestdale's own—with a peculiar toss of the head, which evidently meant to imply that she had thought a good deal on the subject, and had formed her own private notions thereon, which, however, she was prepared to render public for the good of the company.

"Think! what should one think?" was the brief reply of the housekeeper, in a tone of voice which evidently meant much more than the speaker chose to express.

"*I* think her a proud, upstart, vulgar creature," exclaimed the other soubrette, who, being specially attached to the service of Lady Clara Langley, felt exceedingly in-

dignant at the advent of all interlopers, as she had, in their turns, termed the various governesses to whom the care of Lady Clara's education had been intrusted.

"My opinion entirely," said Mrs Grimmer, the housekeeper; "only fancy, she actually had the impudence to give me an order yesterday, just as if she wasn't a hired servant like ourselves! Doesn't she receive wages like me, or you, or Mr Simms there? Well, for my part, I never could abide governesses."

"Really, Mrs Grimmer," observed the butler, timidly, "really, I think you are too harsh in your opinion of Miss Worthington. For my part, I consider she looks quite a lady, and, indeed, I understand she is one, only she has met with misfortunes, lost all she had in the world, or something of the kind."

"Oh, that's what they all says of

themselves," exclaimed Mrs Harris, Lady Forestdale's maid, "there never was a governess yet as wasn't something quite perdigious once. Pah! it makes me quite sick to think of the airs as they all give themselves."

"At any rate," said Miss Betsy Hicks, Lady Clara's maid, "I'll try and make the house too hot for her, and, unless I'm greatly mistaken, she'll soon mizzle after them as is gone before her.—Now, bless me, if she isn't a-ringing her bell; catch me answering it, that's all!"

The bell was rung several times, much to the evident amusement of the abigails and the housekeeper, who, in spite of the entreaties of the butler, remained fixed in their seats, crying out, "Let her pull away till doomsday if she likes, there's nothing to prevent her *ringing*."

A short time had elapsed, when a

gentle knock was heard at the door, which opening, Paulina appeared ; not one, however, of the woman-servants rose on her entrance, but, on the contrary, remained seated, fixing their eyes upon her with a stare of the most supercilious impertinence.

"I am afraid my bell is not heard down-stairs," observed Miss Worthington, "so I have come to mention that there is no water either in my jug or decanter."

"That doesn't concern us, Miss," exclaimed Betsy Hicks, with an insolent toss of the head, "that's Sally, the housemaid's business."

"Would you then have the kindness to let her know what I am in want of?" returned Paulina, "and also tell her that Lady Clara requires the same."

"Oh! Lady Clara's jug is empty," cried Betsy, jumping up with feigned

alacrity; "in that case I will take some water up to her room directly, for it is my business to wait upon *Lady Clara*."

"Would you in the mean while give my message to Sally?" continued Paulina, pretending not to notice the marked insolence of the lady's maid.

"I am sure I don't know where she is," cried the abigail, pertly.

"Nor I," said Mrs Grimmer, in a similar manner.

"Perhaps she is in the servant's hall," observed Mrs Harris, "so if you want her, Miss, you can go and call for her there."

"No," cried Mr Simms, indignantly, "I'll be hanged if Miss Worthington shall do any such sort of thing. I beg pardon, Miss, but if you will leave the matter to me I will take care that all you require shall be done immediately."

"Thank you, sir," replied Paulina, as she retired, in a tone so gentle and lady-like, that even Mrs Grimmer felt somewhat conscience-stricken for the manner in which she had conducted herself towards the poor friendless orphan.

And Paulina, how bitterly did she feel her present humble lot, and how sad were the tears she shed when she found herself alone in her chamber!

Alas! that it should be so, but candour compels us to avow that in no other country in the world are governesses, in general, so contemptuously treated, both by masters and servants, as in England.

And yet these ill-used women are the companions of our wives, our daughters, and our sisters.

Miss Worthington had been about a month with Lady Forestdale, when one morning after breakfast, as she was reading

aloud the *Morning Post*, according to her custom at the conclusion of that meal, to the two ladies, she came suddenly upon the following paragraph, headed—

From our Own Correspondent.

GALLANT CONDUCT OF A BRITISH NAVAL
OFFICER.

“As His Majesty’s frigate, the *Warrior*, was coasting, on the 18th of October ult., along the western shores of South America, she was suddenly overtaken by a terrific hurricane. Such was the tremendous force of the wind, that the ship lay over with her guns under water, while the mizen-mast and the fore and main top-mast went over the side.

“The fore and main masts still stood, supporting the weight of the rigging and broken masts, which like a powerful lever

pressed the labouring vessel down on her side. To disengage this enormous top-hammer was an object more to be desired than expected. Yet the case was desperate, and unless a desperate effort should be made, it was evident that before a quarter of an hour all would be over, for every succeeding wave appeared to make a deeper and more fatal impression upon the ship, which kept descending rapidly in the hollows of the sea, and rising with a dull and exhausted motion, as if she felt that she could soon struggle no longer.

“Suddenly one of the mates, seizing a tomahawk, made signs to the captain (for the noise of the tempest rendered all attempts at speaking impossible) that he would attempt to cut away the wreck, and hastened in a most undaunted manner to mount the rigging. Five or six seamen immediately rushed after the daring youth,

for, wherever an officer leads, English sailors will always follow.

“On reaching the catharpens the volunteers found that they had only just foot-room; they, however, set to work as coolly as though they were in the midst of a dead calm, the men taking the lanyards of the topmast-rigging, the mate the slings of the main-yard. The lusty blows dealt by their brave arms were answered by corresponding crashes, and at length down fell the tremendous wreck over the larboard gunwale. The ship felt instant relief and righted, but, alas! the glorious deed had been executed at a terrible sacrifice, for the heroic young mate was carried overboard with the wreck he had cut away, and was instantly ingulfed in the foaming billows; but the brave sailors who had aided in the work fortunately escaped the fate of their gallant leader.

“The name of the young officer who thus devoted himself to the service of his country, and who was the means, under Providence, of saving both the frigate and her numerous crew, was George Worthington, only son of the late Lieutenant Worthington, R.N., who was killed during a desperate action with a French corvette in the Indian seas in the year 1808.”

The last sentence was not read aloud, for no sooner had Paulina glanced her eyes over it, than she fell back upon her chair in a state of insensibility.

“Good gracious, Miss Worthington,” cried the Dowager, rising hastily, “what is the matter?”

“She is dying, mamma,” exclaimed Lady Clara, who had immediately hastened to the assistance of her unconscious governess, “for her hands are quite cold, and her face has turned as white as snow.”

“Ring the bell, instantly,” said her mother, suiting the action to the word, and as her daughter pulled down one bell-rope, she pulled down the other.

As may be easily imagined, the servants rushed up-stairs into the breakfast-room, and all were soon so busily engaged with the invalid, that no one observed that in the mean while a carriage had driven up to the street door, excepting the porter, who being in the hall was unaware of what had occurred in the interior of the mansion; and thus it was that the occupiers of the vehicle, who were none other than Lord Forestdale and his brother, Colonel William Langley, entered the room without being remarked, when the Earl, perceiving what was going forward, went up to the fainting girl, and taking her in his arms, proceeded to use various modes of resuscitation, in a

manner which proved he was not unaccustomed to the duty.

“Let the men-servants run for Dr Watson,” he exclaimed after a few minutes, “and tell him to come over without delay, this is a serious case.”

The nobleman’s commands were at once obeyed, and the men-servants all started off in search of the physician, and in a moment the chamber was vacated by every one excepting the Dowager, her daughter, her two sons, and the female domestics of the house.

“What is the cause of Miss Worthington’s illness?” inquired the Earl of his mother, while the others continued their attentions to the still insensible girl.

“I cannot possibly imagine,” returned the Dowager, “for she was reading the newspaper aloud, and was apparently in

perfect health the instant before she fainted away."

"Show me the paragraph she was perusing," said her son. "Ah!" he continued, on looking rapidly over its contents, "I can easily understand it all,—the paper contains an account of her brother's death by drowning."

"Poor girl," said Lady Forestdale, compassionately, "that is quite sufficient to excuse what has happened, for, excepting on such a melancholy occasion, I do not consider that a governess has any right to faint."

At this moment the doctor arrived, and after a while Paulina was restored to consciousness, when the first object she recognized, on opening her eyes, was the Earl of Forestdale, who was standing over and regarding her features with such an

expression of sensual tenderness, that at any other time she would have shuddered.

The physician having directed his patient to be conveyed to her bed-room, she was accompanied thither by the ladies of the house and their maids, one of whom, Miss Betsy Hicks, kept tossing up her head indignantly, and muttering to her fellow-servant, "Well, if ever I see a governess give herself such airs, bless my stars!"

"Bless my stars, indeed!" responded Mrs Harris; "why, had she been a countess she could not have made more of herself; I've already lived with three titled ladies, and never see the likes before, never! I think the world must be coming to an end."

As soon as the two brothers were left alone, the Earl asked of the other what he thought of the new governess.

"She is a great deal too handsome to be here," returned William Langley, shaking his head with a serious air.

"Why so, William?" inquired his brother.

"I noticed the look you threw upon her, Forestdale, as the colour was returning to her cheeks, and it did not please me."

"Come, William, no preaching," exclaimed the Earl; "remember you are a soldier, and not a Methodist parson."

"It is neither my wish nor my intention to preach a sermon, my dear Forestdale, only, if I have been rightly informed, it was through your recommendation that the lovely girl, for lovely she is, became an inmate of this house."

"Well! and what harm was there in my advising our mother to engage a per-

son who is in every way suited to fill the situation she occupies ?”

“None whatever, if you were prompted thereto by no ulterior design, but I am well aware of your love for beauty, and I was forcibly struck just now, firstly, by the manner in which you held her in your arms; secondly, by the exulting expression of your face when you heard of the death of her brother, who, as she is an orphan, was her sole protector; and, thirdly—

“By Jove, William,” interrupted Lord Forestdale, ironically, “I was not wrong when I hinted something about your being cut out for a Methodist parson, for there you are, already beginning with your firstly, secondly, and thirdly.”

“A man may be honourable without being necessarily a Methodist, Forestdale,” returned the Colonel. “Remember that

Miss Worthington is under the protection of our own mother's roof, and that she is the companion of our sister."

"You are wasting your breath," said the Earl, "for in all probability I shall have forgotten even the existence of the girl before I have left the house ten minutes."

"Heaven grant it be so," returned his brother, with a serious shake of the head; for it was evident he did not place full reliance in Lord Forestdale's assertion; indeed, he was too well aware of the disposition of that nobleman to do so. He, however, determined in his own mind to make every effort in his power to protect the beautiful young girl from the machinations which, he felt certain, were being prepared to entrap her. The unusual loveliness and evident innocence of Paulina Worthington, brief as had been the time they had re-

mained in each other's presence, had deeply touched his heart; indeed, it must be confessed that there was a small particle of very pardonable egotism in the feeling that prompted him to speak to his brother so warmly.

The Dowager, who returned to the room at this moment, brought tidings of the invalid being in a very dangerous state, caused by the sudden revulsion of feeling her nerves had undergone, and that in all probability some time would elapse before her recovery.

Lord Forestdale felt inclined to think that some latent power was intervening between his intended victim and himself, for another delay in the schemes he had formed was occasioned by her illness. The obstacles, however, which he had met with in his path served merely to increase the warmth of his feelings, and he inwardly

vowed that no stone should be left unturned that might tend to assist his projects.

Several weeks elapsed before Paulina was sufficiently recovered to renew the duties of her place, and even then she had by no means regained her former strength. During the most dangerous period of her illness she had received a visit from her old friend, the Rev. Mr Pearson, who had made the journey to London immediately on learning the fact of the death of George Worthington; rightly anticipating the effect that melancholy event would produce upon the frame of the now desolate orphan. The excellent terms in which the worthy ecclesiastic spoke of the young girl served to raise her very much in the esteem of the Dowager Lady Forestdale, who was previously by no means badly disposed towards her, and even Mrs Grimmer, Mrs Harris, and Miss Betsy Hicks began to

think that, after all, the governess might have been bred and born a real lady. As for Mr Simms the butler, he begged his fellow-servants to remember that he had entertained that opinion from the first, and as a grand climax, Mrs Grimmer was actually seen to carry up, on three several occasions, some soup of her own particular making to Paulina's bed-room.

There was one member of the family, however, who was more anxious about the invalid than any other inmate of the house, although he had never seen her before the day on which he had arrived during her fainting fit. As long as Paulina was confined to her bed, the inquiries of Colonel Langley at the door of her room were incessant; and as soon as she was able to come down to the drawing-room, he was constantly at her side, either assisting her to turn over the leaves of a portfolio or

reading aloud. To be brief, he became deeply enamoured of the gentle maiden, while Paulina felt towards him as she had never before felt towards a created being. The progress of their love passed unnoticed, as Lady Forestdale imagined her son's attentions to be prompted by his naturally kind heart, while Lady Clara had become so attached to her governess, that she considered it by no means extraordinary, but quite the contrary, that her brother should also be partial to her. The Colonel's regiment had been quartered at Hounslow the day before that on which Paulina had fallen ill; and the proximity of its barracks to London enabled the young commanding officer to make frequent and long visits to St James's Square.

The Earl of Forestdale also watched the progress of Paulina's recovery with the same anxious eyes, but with very differ-

ent motives to those which actuated his younger brother, whose continual presence in his mother's house was by no means pleasing to the Earl. As the moment of the invalid's convalescence approached he determined to strike the decisive blow, and carry into execution the intentions which had induced him to place her in her present situation. Nothing, however, in his outward demeanour towards Miss Worthington could have induced the young girl to entertain the slightest suspicion that the nobleman was plotting her ruin.

CHAPTER VIII.

Lord Forestdale receives an uninvited visit from Messieurs William Cockle and Montgomery Pops, to whom Paulina proves that she is in her senses.

ON a lovely afternoon towards the latter end of May, the Earl of Forestdale was seated at the window of a villa looking upon the Thames, a couple of miles from Richmond. The apartment occupied at the moment by the young nobleman was furnished in the most elegant and luxurious manner; the boudoir, indeed, of the most finished Parisian *petite maitresse* would have

lost by the comparison. Nor was this magnificence confined to that one apartment; for money had been expended with a most lavish hand, guided, however, by the most exquisite taste, upon both the interior and exterior of the building, which, although not of large size, was the *ne plus ultra* of a *cottage ornée*. It was situated in the centre of a delicious flower-garden of nearly an acre in extent, and surrounded by a paling, within which was planted a hedge of laurels, so thick as to intercept the view from the ground-floor windows on every side, excepting that looking on the river.

It was, indeed, exactly the spot which a newly married couple of romantic disposition would have selected to pass the remainder of their lives; or, in other words, the honeymoon.

As we have already observed, the

month of May was drawing to a close, and the summer not having set in with its usual severity, a soft balmy air pervaded the atmosphere, refreshing with its fragrant breath the somewhat fevered brow of the noble proprietor of the villa.

Although, to a superficial observer, Lord Forestdale would have appeared absorbed in the contemplation of the scenery before his eyes, his thoughts were far away, or, more strictly speaking, as will be soon perceived, intent on what was passing at a short distance. Ever and anon he cast a hasty glance at a clock of Sèvres china which stood on the mantel-piece; and at length an expression of impatience passed over his handsome countenance as he marked the hour.

“Half past three!” he exclaimed, rising from his chair and beginning to

pace up and down the room ; “ by Jove, if that fellow Dyson has made any mistake I’ll discharge him.”

And again he resumed his seat.

Just as the time-piece was striking the three-quarters, the sound of carriage-wheels was heard approaching.

“ Here she comes at last,” cried the young nobleman, with glistening eyes.

After the lapse of a few minutes the door was opened by Dyson, and Paulina Worthington entered the room, dressed in deep mourning, and wearing a bonnet and shawl of the same materials.

“ Where is Lady Forestdale, my Lord ?” she inquired, after returning the nobleman’s salutation, “ I expected to find both her Ladyship and Lady Clara here.”

“ Is Lady Forestdale yet returned from her drive ?” asked the Earl of Dyson.

"We are expecting her Ladyship every moment, my Lord," was the answer, as the servant retired.

"In the mean while, Miss Worthington," said the nobleman, with an air of the most respectful politeness, "pray be seated. I trust by this," he continued, "that you are entirely recovered from your late severe illness?"

"You are very kind, my Lord," returned Paulina, "I am happy to say that my late residence in the country has almost completely restored me to health, and I am beginning to feel quite strong again."

"The air about Richmond is peculiarly healthy," observed the Earl, "while few spots in England can boast of such attractive scenery. I presume, Miss Worthington, that you would not have any objection to residing here altogether, out of the smoke and noise of London?"

"I was brought up in the country, my Lord," said Paulina, "and naturally prefer it to London or any other large town."

"I do not wonder at your taste," remarked Lord Forestdale, "for I myself, when I was first launched upon the wide ocean of London, pined for the picturesque scenery and wild woodlands of Langley Park. But, might I ask you what is your opinion of this villa? Although of smaller size than the one belonging to my mother, it is, to my fancy, far more tastefully arranged. How do you like this apartment?"

"It is beautiful," my Lord, returned the young girl.

"There is not a room in the villa that is not quite equal in the splendour of its fittings-up to this saloon," said the Earl; "pray allow me to act as your cicerone until my mother's return (she ought to have

been here already), and to have the pleasure of showing you over the house."

"You are very kind, my Lord," said Miss Worthington, as the Earl rose for the purpose he had just mentioned.

The nobleman and the young girl, having ascended a marble staircase, entered a large room situated just above the saloon, and the windows of which, like those below, overlooked the river.

This chamber was the perfection of luxury and good taste, the walls were hung with tapestry of white silk and gold, and the ceiling was covered, in the form of a tent top, with the same rich materials. On the mantel-piece, which was of Roman pavement, stood a magnificent French clock, flanked on either side with beautifully worked chandeliers; bronze ornaments, most delicately chased, covered the *gueridon* and other tables, and exotics of

the rarest kind, growing in cases artistically constructed of bamboo, sent forth the most fragrant perfumes through the boudoir.

“What do you think of this room?” inquired the nobleman, fixing a piercing look upon the countenance of his fair visitor.

“It is even more beautiful than that below,” said Paulina, “and it is tasteful as it is sumptuous.”

“Would you dislike becoming the possessor of such a place?” asked Lord Forestdale.

“It is so very improbable,” returned the young girl, smiling, “that I should ever be in possession of such a residence, that the supposition could not by the most remote possibility enter my imagination.”

“You are too modest, Miss Worthington,” said the nobleman; “this villa is but a humble cottage in comparison with the

palace that ought to call you its mistress."

There was a tender expression in the tone of the speaker's voice as he uttered these words, that caused a sense of uneasiness to come over her to whom they were addressed, and turning hastily from the Earl, she moved towards the door.

"Lady Forestdale will be here directly," she observed, "and I ought to be down-stairs to receive her Ladyship."

"One instant, Miss Worthington," cried the nobleman, "listen to me for one instant, I have something to say to you of the utmost importance, on which the happiness of my future life depends. Nay, listen to me, though but for a moment, loveliest of girls," he continued, as Paulina's countenance gave most unequivocal signs of astonishment, "while I tell you that I love, adore you!"

“My Lord!” exclaimed the young girl, indignantly.

“Oh! do not start and look so angry,” cried the Earl, with energy, “for what I have said and done has been through adoration of you, divinest of maidens!”

With these words he grasped her hand, but before he had had time to press it to his lips, Paulina had hastily withdrawn it and sprung towards the door, which she attempted to open.

It was locked, for on entering the room Lord Forestdale had, unperceived by the young girl, turned the key, which he had put into his pocket.

“What is the meaning of this outrageous conduct, my Lord?” she cried, sternly; “I must insist on your opening the door instantly, or I shall call for assistance.”

An almost imperceptible smile of irony

played over the nobleman's countenance, as the indignant maiden gave utterance to this threat.

"Before I obey your orders, loveliest of beings," he said, in a gentle voice, "you must listen to what I have to say."

"Not a word, not a syllable," cried Miss Worthington, as she energetically attempted to force open the door; "my Lord, if you are a gentleman you will not detain me here a moment longer."

"Paulina!" exclaimed the nobleman, speaking in a most impassioned manner, "you must pardon my refusing to obey your commands in this one instance, for my love, the ardent love I feel for you, must prove my excuse. Yes! I love you as man never yet loved woman, I have loved you ever since I first beheld you, I will love you as long as there is breath in my body."

Paulina did not stay to listen to the impassioned declaration, but hastening to the fire-place she seized the bell-handle and began to ring violently.

"It is useless ringing, angelic enchantress!" said the Earl, "this villa is mine, and all within its precincts are devoted to me. Pray pardon me, dearest girl, the innocent stratagem I used in order that this abode might be graced by your presence."

"What mean you, my Lord?"

"If you will listen calmly to me for a few moments I will explain all."

In answer to this appeal Miss Worthington continued to ring with all her force.

No one answered the call, although she pulled the bell again and again.

"Lord Forestdale," at length she exclaimed, bursting into tears, "this outrageous conduct is unworthy of a gentle-

man and a man of honour. I now see through it all; the carriage I met while walking in the grounds of Lady Forestdale's villa, and which the driver informed me had been sent by her Ladyship's orders to fetch me, was evidently a snare set to lure me hither."

"I must plead guilty to your accusation," returned the nobleman, with a smile; "there exist, however, most extenuating circumstances in my favour; for your beauty, your grace, and your unrivalled accomplishments, have driven me nearly frantic with love. You must, you shall listen to what I have to say," he continued. "You have seen this villa, say but one word, and it, the surrounding grounds, and all they contain, shall be yours, together with the most unbounded wealth; say that word, dearest Paulina! say that you will try to love me."

The only answer returned by Paulina to this rhapsody was by her beginning to scream out loudly.

Rendered desperate by her continued opposition to his wishes, Lord Forestdale proceeded to throw his arms round her waist and clasp her to his bosom. He had already succeeded in imprinting several impassioned kisses on her lips, when the young girl, having, by a violent effort, broke loose from his embraces, darted towards the window, and having quickly thrown up the sash before the nobleman could prevent the act, she rushed out upon the balcony.

Just at that moment a skiff was ascending the stream close to the bank on which the villa was situated, which being perceived by Paulina, she screamed out with all her force :

“**HELP! HELP!**”

Before she could give utterance to another word she was pulled back into the room by the Earl, and the window closed.

Her cry for succour, however, had been heard by the occupiers of the boat, which was indeed but a few yards distant from the scene that had been just acted.

"Cockle!" cried the steerer, "did you see that girl, and hear that cry?"

"Yes, Pops," returned his companion, resting on his sculls, "a deaf man could have heard her, and a blind one almost have seen her; did you not know her face?"

"I thought so," was the answer.

"And I am very much mistaken," continued the other, "if she isn't—"

"Our fellow-traveller, some months ago, in the coach?"

"Exactly so."

"Whom they are murdering up-stairs in that house!"

"At any rate they are ill-treating her."

"Cockle!"

"Well, Pops."

"Are you a man?"

"I should hope so."

"Then—"

"Then what?"

"Let us land and knock at the door."

"But suppose they won't open, which is more than probable, considering what's going on inside."

"In that case we will take the liberty of opening it for ourselves."

"Hum! what, break in?"

"Anyhow we can call for the police."

"The police out here?"

"At least we can get a reinforcement if necessary, for this affair looks more than suspicious."

“Well, heave ashore, I’m your man.”

And having hastily uttered these words, Mr William Cockle and Mr Montgomery Pops, who were the occupiers of the skiff, leaped on shore, and running round to the front-door of the villa, rang the bell.

Several minutes elapsed without any answer being made to the call. Again and again did they ring, and, in addition, they proceeded to beat a peal upon the panels, loud enough to have awakened a drunkard from his slumbers.

At length a window on the first floor was opened, and a man’s face appeared.

“What on earth are you kicking up such an infernal row for?” said the owner of the countenance, who was no other than Dyson.

“We want to see the master of the house,” returned Cockle.

“Master’s not at home,” was the brief reply.

"Who then is ill-treating that young lady up-stairs?"

"What young lady?"

"You know very well whom we mean."

"There is no young lady in the house," surlily growled the valet.

"We have eight proofs to the contrary," exclaimed Pops,—“our four eyes and our four ears, and consequently if you do not at once open the door, we shall break it open, and examine into the affair.”

No sooner had Mr Montgomery Pops given vent to this threat, than the muzzle of a huge double-barrelled pistol was passed through the window.

"Only just try and do it, my fine fellows," cried Dyson, sarcastically, as he proceeded to cock the piece, "that's all! If, however, you will take my advice, you won't do anything of the sort, leaden

pills are not very healthy for the constitution."

Messrs Cockle and Pops backed a pace or two on perceiving the hostile weapon pointed at their persons, but the former, instantly recovering his courage, turned to his companion.

"Pops," he said, in a loud voice, "just run to those houses on the hill, and tell the people who live there that murder is going on here. I'll stay till you come back."

Mr Montgomery Pops had, in compliance with this suggestion, already made several steps in the direction pointed out by his friend, when a loud, authoritative voice issuing from the interior of the villa caused him to halt.

"Open the door," cried the voice, "and let the fellows in."

After the lapse of a few minutes the door was opened by Dyson, who ushered

the two actors into the drawing-room, where they found the Earl of Forestdale seated in an easy chair, with his back turned to the windows.

“What is the meaning of this insolence?” he exclaimed; “are you not aware that if I choose I can have you both sent to gaol?”

“Our apparent intrusion,” returned Pops, somewhat taken aback by the nobleman’s self-possessed demeanour and arrogant tone of voice, “was occasioned by the appearance of a lady, personally known to us, on the balcony of the window on the first floor looking to the river.”

“Well, and what is that to you?” cried the Earl; “cannot one look out upon the Thames without every bawling idiot that passes taking upon himself to make a disturbance at my house door?”

“But the lady cried out for help,” in-

sinuated Cockle, "and in such a case it is the duty of all who consider themselves true Britons to afford aid and assistance; 'For he that layeth his hand upon a woman, save in the way of kindness, is a wretch, whom it were gross flattery to call a coward.'"

"Ah!" returned the nobleman, with a sneer, guessing by the quotation at the nature of the speaker's calling, "two strolling mountebanks, I perceive, who I suppose dignify themselves with the appellation of dramatic artists."

"We are no mountebanks," exclaimed Pops in an angry tone, "but two honest Englishmen, who have chosen the stage as a profession, and do not consider themselves humiliated thereby."

"Pardon me, my good man," observed Lord Forestdale, "but if you are come here to make quotations, and have a dis-

sertation on the drama, I must beg you to call again when I am not engaged ; there is the door, gentlemen !”

“ We do not intend to leave this place till we have had a satisfactory explanation concerning the lady up-stairs,” sturdily responded Mr Pops.

“ Do you unite the profession of Bow-street runners with that of actors, Mr What’s-your-name ?” said the Earl, impatiently, “ if so, pray let me know it at once.”

“ No, sir,” interrupted Mr Cockle, “ but we know enough of law to be quite aware that when murder or violence has been committed, any one may arrest the felon and take him before a magistrate ; and such being the case, unless we receive a proper and categorical explanation of the very extraordinary scene we witnessed just now, one of us will remain here, while

the other hastens to Richmond for a couple of constables and a warrant."

An expression of impatience passed over the Earl's countenance.

"Do you happen to know who I am?" he exclaimed.

"No," was the answer, "but if we did know, that would not hinder our finding our way back here with the constables."

"To prevent any mistake," said the nobleman, with a curl of his lip, "tell the magistrate to whom you may apply for a warrant, that the owner of this villa is the Earl of Forestdale, and that *I* am that owner, accused of I do not know what, by two strolling mountebanks; go, sir,—pray do not let me detain you, your friend can remain here till your return."

The calm, sarcastic tone in which these last words were spoken had a visible effect upon the two young men, who were evi-

dently awed by learning the exalted rank of the person before them, and it was in a much humbler tone than the one he had hitherto used that Mr Cockle again addressed the nobleman.

“My Lord,” he observed, “I must beg pardon if I have offended, but really your Lordship must in candour allow that when one sees and hears a lady crying out for help on a balcony, and then a gentleman lugging her back into a room, one naturally cannot but imagine that something extraordinary must have happened.”

“You are not wrong in your last surmise,” returned Lord Forestdale, assuming a much less haughty demeanour than he had hitherto done, “and I do not altogether disapprove of the decidedly respectable sentiment that has prompted you and your friend to act as you have done; and as you now choose to couch your language in

a more respectful strain I shall do you the honour of explaining the apparently mysterious scene you lately witnessed."

On hearing these words, Mr Cockle gazed with a surprised air at his companion, and exclaimed :

" "Speak you so gently? pardon me, I pray you ;
I thought that all things had been savage here."

"My Lord," he added with a bow, "I trust you will, considering the circumstances, excuse us if we have said anything offensive."

"The lady you perceived and heard just now," continued the Earl, "and whom you assert to be personally known to you—"

"We once travelled with her in the same coach," interrupted Mr Cockle.

"In the York Union, I suppose, which took her up at Longmoor, in Lincolnshire,

last January," added the nobleman, with great presence of mind.

"Exactly so," returned both the young men, evidently taken aback.

"That lady is under the especial care and protection of my family," continued Lord Forestdale; "in consequence,"—here his voice appeared to falter,—"in consequence, poor child,"—here the speaker wiped his eyes with his handkerchief,—"of a malady with which it has pleased the inscrutable will of Providence to afflict her—"

"A malady!" echoed the two actors.

"The most terrible by which mortal can be visited—her reason is gone—"

"What, mad?" cried Mr Cockle.

"Yes, mad, irrevocably, stark, staring mad," said the Earl; "her poor father was so before her."

"How dreadful!" cried Mr Pops, "so beautiful a creature too, and who seemed

so sensible when she was travelling with us."

"It is but very lately that she fell into her present melancholy state," observed the nobleman, "which was brought on by a disappointment in love."

"Poor girl!" cried Mr Cockle.

"She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There's tricks i'the world, and hems and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense."

"You have described her wretched state more perfectly than any words of mine could explain it," replied the Earl; "alas! poor Paulina is mad."

And the nobleman hid his face in his hands, and was seemingly overwhelmed with grief.

"Pray excuse our having intruded, my Lord," said Mr Pops, "for we were quite unaware of how the land lay."

With these words he bowed respectfully and was retiring with his friend, when a noise, as of a door bursting violently open, was heard up-stairs.

"Hang it!" cried the Earl, stamping with vexation, "she has broke loose."

The noise increased, and footsteps were heard descending the staircase.

At this moment Dyson entered the room, pale and breathless.

"She is coming down, my Lord," he cried.

The words were hardly out of his mouth when Miss Worthington entered the room.

No sooner did she perceive the two comedians, than, although she did not immediately recognize their persons, she ran up to them, imploring their protection.

"Let me conjure you," she exclaimed, "to assist me to leave this house."

Lord Forestdale, unperceived by the young girl, gave a shrug and shook his head.

"Pray be calm, Miss," said Mr Pops, "no one intends you any harm."

"What, are you an actor in the plot, too?" cried Paulina, despairingly.

"There is no plot in contemplation, Miss," said Mr Cockle, persuasively, "pray let me therefore entreat you to be calm."

"What, no plot!" cried Miss Worthington, "when I have been lured to this polluted roof under false pretences, exposed to the most outrageous insults, and deprived of my liberty. Oh, let me entreat you, if you are men, to assist me to quit this house."

At this moment, perceiving by the reflection of a mirror that Lord Forestdale was making signs behind her back, and pointing to his forehead, she at once guessed the real state of the case.

"I see it all," she exclaimed in an agonized voice, "Lord Forestdale has made you believe that I am mad."

"Pray do not agitate yourself, I beseech you," said Mr Cockle, who was thoroughly impressed with the truth of the Earl's assertion, "pray, pray be calm."

Perceiving that even those at whose hands she had looked for protection, were convinced of her being out of her senses, Paulina shook her hands in despair, and throwing herself upon a chair, burst into tears.

"Gentlemen," whispered the nobleman, "might I request you to take your departure? for your presence serves only to excite the poor creature."

On receiving this invitation, the two actors, having bowed respectfully, were moving towards the door, when Paulina placed herself before them.

"I can assure you I am not mad," she exclaimed with energy; "you have been deceived by a shameful artifice,—but," she added, gazing fixedly upon the countenances of the young men with a look of recognition, "we have met before, yes! I remember you well, we travelled together last January in the coach from Longmoor."

"She speaks very sensibly for a mad woman," thought Cockle, "and cannot be very bad, as she recollects us."

What might have been the issue of Paulina's last appeal is uncertain; for at that moment a cabriolet drove up to the door of the villa.

"William! by all that's infernal," exclaimed Lord Forestdale, looking out of the window.

With these words he hastily quitted the

room, leaving Miss Worthington alone with the two comedians.

“Pops!” cried Cockle, addressing his companion as soon as the Earl had disappeared, “I declare we have been thoroughly humbugged, and I’ll be bound the lady is no more mad than either you or I.”

“Oh, no!” said Paulina fervently, who the moment she had heard the Earl pronounce his brother’s name knew she was safe. “Oh, no! and here comes one who will answer for the sanity of my intellect.”

As she spoke, Colonel Langley entered.

CHAPTER IX.

Paulina receives a second declaration of love, of a very different nature from the first.

A VERY few minutes were required to inform the new-comer of what had taken place, and to make him acquainted with the outrageous conduct of his elder brother; and just as the account was brought to a close, the noise of wheels was heard without, and a carriage was seen driving rapidly from the villa.

"It is Forestdale," said the Colonel, "I do not wonder at his hasty departure,

for his breast must have been encircled with triple brass had he dared to face you, Miss Worthington, after what has occurred."

"It must, indeed," exclaimed Cockle.

"What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted?
Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just;
And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."

"Gentlemen!" said Colonel Langley, as the comedian brought his very *apropos* quotation to a conclusion, "allow me, in the name of Miss Worthington, to express my grateful feelings and admiration for your generous behaviour; and to assure you that I shall be most happy if I can be of any service to you."

"You can, indeed, do us a great service, sir," returned Cockle, with great readiness, "and at the same time be procuring yourself an amusement not always within the reach of mortal man. You must know,

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sir, that my friend and myself are at the present moment engaged at the Richmond Theatre ; next Monday is our benefit, and if you would do us the honour of patronizing the performances, we should feel both proud and grateful."

"With the utmost pleasure, my dear sir," returned the Colonel, "and not only shall you have my patronage and presence, but those of the officers of my regiment, the —th Dragoons, now quartered at Hounslow."

"You overwhelm me," said the comedian, delighted at the success of his request ; "is there anything in the world I can do to serve you in return ? 'Ply me, try me, prove ere you deny me ; if you cast me off you blast me, never more to rise.' By the by, is there any particular piece that you would prefer ?"

"I leave the choice of the performances

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entirely to your discretion," replied the Colonel, with a smile.

"In that case," continued Cockle, reflectingly, "it shall be,—what shall it be? let me see, 'Theatre Royal, Richmond, under the patronage and presence of the Colonel and officers of the —th Dragoons, and for the benefit of Messieurs Cockle and Montgomery Pops. On Monday next will be performed, Shakespeare's soul-absorbing comedy of the 'Merchant of Venice,'—we stick up, you will perceive, for the legitimate,—*Shylock*, Mr Montgomery Pops, my friend there, *Gratiano*, Mr Cockle; after which a comic song by Mr Cockle, to be followed by the laughable after-piece of Paul Pry. The character of *Paul Pry* by Mr Cockle. After which a comic hornpipe by Mademoiselle Margaretta de Villeroy from the Académie Royale, Paris, and Signor Stiggino from the Royal Opera,

Brussels; to conclude with the screaming farce of the 'Sleep-walker,' the character of the *Sleep-walker* by Mr Cockle. What do you think of the bill of fare, sir? Does it give you satisfaction, or would you like something more?"

"What you have mentioned will do admirably," returned the Colonel, "and I am sure that both myself and my brother officers will derive the utmost satisfaction from witnessing the talented performances of yourself and your friend."

"You do us proud," said Mr Cockle, as he, as well as Mr Pops, bowed low; "I am sorry, however, that you will only behold us upon the boards of a provincial theatre, for by rights, had we our deserts, we ought to be top-sawyering it at old Drury or the Garden; but the jealousy of others has kept us in the back-ground:

——‘O my Lord, beware of jealousy,
It is a green-eyed monster.’

“As it is, we will do our best to amuse you, the officers of the —th Dragoons, the nobility, gentry, the public at large, and our friends in general, in the humble temple allotted to the dramatic muse in the poor town of Richmond.

‘I think there be six Richmonds in the field.’

“By the by, would you prefer the stage-box or a box in front?”

“Whichever you consider the most suitable for my party and myself,” replied the Colonel, good-humouredly; “as I have already observed, I leave everything entirely to your discretion.”

“And you will have no reason to complain of having so done, sir,” said the comedian, pulling out a card,—“there is my

address, in case you should change your mind and desire some alteration in the list of the performances. Miss, I have the honour to bid you farewell, Colonel Langley, the same; be assured that both my heart and hand are at your service whenever you may choose to command them."

After a mutual exchange of good wishes, the two comedians returned to their skiff, and in a few minutes were seen rapidly ascending the stream.

That same evening Colonel Langley and Paulina Worthington might have been perceived walking in the grove behind Lady Forestdale's villa. The sun had not long set, and a balmy softness pervaded the air; it was one of those delicious evenings that seem expressly made for the purpose of affording two young lovers an opportunity of pledging their vows to one another.

It was evident, from the animated manner and gestures of Colonel Langley, that he was attempting to persuade his beauteous companion to take some step to which she demurred.

“Paulina,” he was saying, “I love you, as you well know, with a true, honourable love; I offer you my hand and name, and you refuse them; you cannot love me in return.”

“Nay, Colonel Langley,” returned the young girl tenderly, “speak not so, for you well know the state of my heart and feelings, but at the same time you must be aware that my present position in life precludes all possibility of my listening to your proposal, honourable and straightforward as it is.”

“And why,” interrupted her lover, “should your position be a bar to our happiness?”

"Because the governess of Lady Forestdale's daughter can never be the wife of Lady Forestdale's son," was the answer.

"Even granting, which I do not," said Langley, "that a governess is an inferior member of society, you, Paulina Worthington, can by no means be counted in the category, for you were not born or educated to be a governess, but belong to an old honourable family, with which the proudest and most ancient peer of England might form an alliance, without derogating one single iota in the estimation of that small faction of society which chooses to denominate itself the world."

"Anyhow, Colonel Langley," returned Paulina with firmness, "I can never be your wife without the sanction of your mother, and you so well know that she will never grant that sanction, that were I to, be ungenerous enough to accept

your generous offer you would be forced to keep our union secret."

"But my mother has, in reality, no right whatever to forbid my following my own inclinations with regard to my marriage," said the Colonel.

"The Bible commands us to honour our father and our mother," observed Paulina.

"I agree with you," replied her lover, "the Bible does tell us to honour our parents; to 'honour,' that is the command, but there is not a word in the sacred writings which enjoins blind obedience to our parents' will. A man is bound to honour the authors of his being as long as they live, but when he becomes of age he is responsible, and therefore master of his own actions, and has a perfect right to act as it may seem fit provided he transgress neither the law of God nor man. I am aware that both in the

present day and past ages parents usurp and have usurped an authority to which they have no real claim, and often prevent their children from following their inclinations in the very case which most essentially concerns their happiness ; and, alas ! how much misery is caused by their interference, how few really happy marriages are contracted, how seldom is one united to the object of one's choice, because that choice does not suit the taste of the parents ! Did those parents but allow their children more liberty to act for themselves in the selection of a partner for life, how much anguish and heart-breaking would be spared to poor humanity ! ”

Paulina answered not, for the force of her lover's reasoning was so apparent that she could not find a word to oppose it.

“ Can you any longer refuse to accept my hand ” ? continued Colonel Langley,

tenderly, "now that I have proved to you my right to act according to my own inclinations?"

"I do not contest your having that right," observed Paulina, "but, at the same time, I cannot consent to your proposal, for to accept it would be to ruin all your prospects in life. Nay! do not attempt to alter my determination, I am decided, for were you so irretrievably to offend Lady Forestdale, and in such a case you would inevitably so do, it would be your ruin. Oh! no, William Langley," she continued, with impassioned warmth, "it cannot be, I love you too well to injure you; let me entreat of you to leave me, and—" here her voice faltered—"to forget me."

"Never," cried Colonel Langley, "for to me poverty with Paulina Worthington would be far preferable to the possession of

unlimited wealth apart from her. You must, you shall be my wife. Nay, do not quit me; listen but a few minutes more—Paulina, Paulina, stay, I entreat you!”

His words, his prayers were vain, at least for the time, as Paulina had hastened away and re-entered the house; she had flown, for she felt that, were she to listen any longer to her lover’s persuasive accents, she could not continue firm in her refusal to accede to his wishes.

“Come what will,” muttered Colonel Langley, as he left the spot, “she shall, must, and will be my wife; I might search the world through without finding one to be compared to Paulina Worthington.”

CHAPTER X.

Mr Rimsdale takes a trip to Paris, where he meets a gentleman he had seen before in very different circumstances.
—A scene takes place in the gambling saloons of Frascati, where the two graziers meet with good luck.

ONE morning Mr Rimsdale, the notary of Manners Street, was observed by the partner of his connubial bliss to be immersed in deep thought. At breakfast he seemed to have scarcely any appetite (an unusual occurrence), and having put some shrimps into his cup instead of a lump of sugar, he did not seem conscious of the

mistake until his attention was called to the fact by the angry voice of Mrs Rimsdale; nor was that the only *contretemps* made by the respectable notary through the absent state of his mind, for all of a sudden his wife gave a suppressed shriek.

"Bless me, Mr Rimsdale," she then proceeded to exclaim, "what, in the name of Fortune, are you thinking about? You have emptied your tea into the milk-jug, instead of pouring out the milk into your tea-cup! What can be the matter with you?"

"Pardon me, my dear Sophonisba," returned her husband, recalled to the realities of life by the sharp tones of his helpmate's voice, "I was thinking about something."

"And pray what may that something be, Mr Rimsdale?" inquired his wife,

"something very improper, I have no doubt."

"Oh! no, my dear," responded the gentleman, meekly, "only business."

"Only business!" cried the gentle Sophonisba, with a contemptuous toss of the head, "only business! and pray may I ask what business you have in hand that makes you lose your head?"

"To say the truth," replied her spouse, with a slight accent of hesitation, "it is necessary for me to go to Paris for a few days."

"What!" screamed out his wife, as she started up with such energy as to nearly upset the urn, which was luckily caught by Mr Rimsdale in time to prevent a catastrophe; "what! going where?"

"To Paris," returned the notary

meekly, "to Paris, my love, on urgent business."

"On a gallivanting trip, more probably," said the lady in a very spiteful tone; "what *business* can you possibly have to transact in Paris?"

"Read that, my dear," replied Mr Rimsdale, throwing a letter, bearing a foreign postmark on the back, across the table, "read that, I received it this morning."

Mrs Rimsdale read the letter, shaking her head dubiously all the time, as if unconvinced.

"You will perceive that I am summoned to the French metropolis by my correspondent, Monsieur Dupont," observed the notary.

"Who, I dare say, is in league with you," said the obstinate-minded woman; "I feel sure that your correspondent is no

better than yourself, and that is not saying much for him ; but if you flatter yourself with the idea that I shall allow you to take a pleasure-trip to that wicked place, Paris, you are quite mistaken, for go you shall not."

"But do you not perceive," observed Mr Rimsdale, in an expostulating tone of voice, "that if I do not start off at once for Paris I shall miss receiving a very large sum of money?"

This was touching the lady on her weak point, for the worship of the golden calf was her great adoration, still she pretended to hold out, although it was easy to perceive that her opposition was not so strong as it had been at first.

"If I were quite sure that it was only on business that you wished to cross the Channel," she observed, in a rather less sharp manner than heretofore, "and not

for the purpose of gallivanting and throwing away money, why, then, perhaps—”

“But it is on business matters only,” interrupted the notary; “you well know that Monsieur Dupont is my Parisian correspondent, indeed you have seen him in London yourself, and you must perceive by his letter how urgently he presses me to run over to Paris immediately, where I am to receive a large sum of money.”

“But is it quite necessary that you should go yourself, Mr Rimsdale?” inquired his wife, almost quite overcome by the continual mention of the words “a large sum of money;” “could you not depute some one, who is about to go to Paris, to act for you?”

“Impossible, my dear!” exclaimed the notary, impatiently, “my personal attend-

ance is necessary, as my signature will be required, and there will be a good deal of business to get through."

"I don't quite like the look of the affair," added the lady, "it seems somewhat suspicious, but you always will have your own way in everything; I haven't the whisper of a voice in any of your affairs, I am never consulted, I am looked upon as the merest mite in the house, and that is the reason nothing goes right. I shouldn't wonder if that letter were an arrangement concocted between you and Monsieur What's-his-name; I never had any confidence in those Frenchmen."

We will cut short the narration of the numerous complaints made by the charmingly-tempered woman, and content ourselves by simply relating that the affair terminated in its being decided that Mr Rimsdale was to start for Paris that very

evening, but that his stay in the French capital should be of the most limited duration.

“And mind, Mr Rimsdale,” were the last words of his affectionate helpmate, as the henpecked husband was on the point of leaving the conjugal roof, “mind not to bring home the same sort of baggage as you did when you returned from your trip into Scotland, once in a way is quite enough.”

The suspicions of the worthy matron as to the excursion of her husband to the Continent were most unfounded, as it was really and truly on business of importance that the notary had been summoned to the luxurious city, the inhabitants of which consider it as the capital of the civilized world.

We will not vouch that it was not the intention of the worthy gentleman to allow himself some recreation when he was

on the other side of the water, and far away from the eye of his better half, for he very naturally reflected that there were four-and-twenty hours in a day and night, and that it would be very hard if a few hours could not be got out of that number which were not of a necessity to be passed in transacting business, or between the sheets of his bed.

Besides, Paris was, is, and always will be a city where, *provided one has plenty of money in one's pocket*, there are more resources in the way of amusement than in any other on the face of the habitable globe, not excepting the great leviathan, London.

At that period a journey to the Continent was by no means the rapid, easy sort of affair it is in the present day; a night's journey in the mail to Dover, a four, or more frequently a five, hours'

passage from thence across the water to Calais, and a long, tedious land journey to Paris in a lumbering diligence, was then considered the *ne plus ultra* of rapid travelling.

It was not therefore until the second morning after his departure from London that Mr Rimsdale was safely deposited at the office of the Messageries Laffitte et Caillard, from whence he proceeded 'in' a *fiacre* to Meurice's hotel in the Rue de Rivoli, where, having refreshed both his outer and his inner person, he hastened to the house inhabited by his correspondent, Monsieur Dupont, a notary in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, with whom he remained for some hours transacting business, it is presumed, of great importance, as at the end of the conference sundry agreeable-feeling and silky pieces of paper, with the words *Banque de France* printed

in capital letters at the top, were handed over by the Frenchman to Mr Rimsdale. It is to be presumed therefore that the latter personage had not come over to Paris on a wild-goose chase, or, as the French say, *Il n'avait pas travaillé pour le roi de Prusse.*

Having transacted his business for the time, and agreed upon a rendezvous with Monsieur Dupont for the following day, Mr Rimsdale sallied forth into the streets of Paris, and turned his steps in the direction of the Boulevards.

At that period, Charles, the tenth of the name, still occupied the throne of France. The term *ancienne noblesse* had not become an empty word, and the aristocracy of the country was not yet composed of *financiers*, but of those descended from families that had rendered themselves illustrious in the land, and the land illus-

trious by their glorious deeds on flood and field. The levelling Revolution of 1830 had not yet taken place, and the white flag, with its *fleurs de lis*, waved over the public buildings and monuments.

Mr Rimsdale sauntered along with a cheerful heart (his pocket was full).

“What a delightful climate,” he said to himself, “how clear the atmosphere looks, no smoke, no misty haze, no dirty-looking houses and public buildings, as in London,—if it were not that I am a married man in business.—I have some knowledge of the language” (he had gone through a course of French grammar while at school, and could translate with the help of a dictionary), “and I daresay that, with a little practice, I could manage to understand what they say, if they didn’t speak so fast.—Well! now that I have nothing more to do for the day, in the way of business, I

will see whether I cannot manage to amuse myself in a quiet way. Shall I go to the theatre? How I wish I could follow the dialogue on the stage, but they do speak so fast—what a pity.”

While he was thus being immersed in his reflections, he had turned into the Rue Lepelletier, and was passing by the Opera House, at the entrance of which were pasted some large posters, by which the public was informed that the opera then in vogue was to be performed that evening, with Monsieur * * * the great tenor, in the principal part.

Although the worthy Englishman had never heard of the name of the great *artiste* before, he could read French sufficiently well to make out that the performance was to be an operatic one, and that there would be a *ballet*.

“It is not necessary to know French

fluently to understand when they sing and dance," he thought, "so to the opera I will go to-night, but I had better secure a place beforehand—where must I apply to do so?"

Having managed to find out the Box Office, as he denominated the *Bureau de Location*, and finding, to the great relief of his mind, that the clerk who took the money could speak English, he expressed his wish to purchase a ticket for the evening's performances.

"I want a place where I can see and hear everything well," he observed.

"A seat in the *avant scènes des premières*," suggested the clerk, civilly.

"Where is that?" inquired Mr Rimsdale.

"Next to the stage," replied the other.

"Oh! the stage-box; just the thing I want," said the notary, as he laid down a *Louis d'or*, and received in return the change

and a slip of paper, on which were printed the words, "*Avant scène des premières, côté gauche,*" the addition of *Place No. 1* being written by the book-keeper.

As it was only five o'clock in the afternoon, and the performances did not begin till seven in the evening, Mr Rimsdale turned his steps to a magnificent-looking restaurant on the Boulevards, in order to dine, and partook there of several expensive delicacies, which would have undoubtedly aroused the anger of Mrs Rimsdale had she been cognizant of the fact, particularly as the exquisite dainties were washed down with some prime Burgundy and iced Champagne of the first quality,—but then the notary was alone, with his pockets full of money, and was determined to enjoy himself, and enjoy himself he did, for his appetite was voracious. At the conclusion of the repast, the very best he had ever made

in the whole course of his life, he very sensibly remarked to himself:

“In France they dine, but in England they only eat and drink.”

At seven o'clock he found himself seated in his reserved seat, and was listening with great delight to the melodious notes of the tenor and *première chanteuse*, when the door of the box was opened, and a gentleman entered, who was evidently a personage of rank, not only from his aristocratic appearance, but also from his wearing the red ribbon of the Order of St Louis over his white waistcoat. He proceeded to seat himself by the side of Mr Rimsdale, who felt exceedingly awed by the close proximity of so great a personage.

The curtain having fallen at the conclusion of the first act, the new-comer turned to his neighbour and observed in French,

“Charmingly sung!”

“Do you understand English, sir?” inquired the notary, “I am not very familiar with the language of the country.”

“Perfectly,” replied the other, speaking English with a very slight French accent, “I have resided several years in England,—but, I beg pardon, sir, I think we have met before?”

Mr Rimsdale gazed upon the fine intellectual countenance of the speaker, whose features, it was true, did not appear altogether unfamiliar to him, but he could not call to mind, for the moment, the time and place they had met.

“I have certainly seen you before to-day, sir,” he stammered, “but when and where I cannot call to mind.”

“I remember now,” said the stranger, smiling; “we journeyed more than a year ago, in the same coach, to London. Perhaps

you may not have forgotten my relating an anecdote about my grandfather?"

"Oh! I perfectly recollect the circumstance now," exclaimed the notary; "you were travelling for—but pardon me, sir," he continued, interrupting the observation he was about to make, "you seem to have got pretty well on in the world since I had the pleasure of meeting you; I presume you have come into possession—"

"Of the estates of my ancestors," interrupted the Frenchman, "and I am able to call myself by my title without being ashamed,—but the second act is about to commence. I propose that after the Opera is over we sup together on the Boulevards."

"I shall be most proud," exclaimed Mr Rimsdale, feeling inordinately flattered by the invitation, "but the curtain is going up; what splendid scenery!"

The worthy notary was right in his

appreciation of the decorations, for there is no theatre in Europe that can produce finer scenic effects than the *Académie de Musique* of Paris.

The Opera was followed by a short ballet, which would have certainly scandalized the puritanical delicacy of Mrs Rimsdale had she been present, but which elicited the most rapturous feelings of gratification from the heart of her husband.

At the conclusion of the performances the Frenchman proposed that they should at once adjourn to a restaurant, to which they were driven in the Marquis's own carriage. Having taken a private *cabinet*, they proceeded to sup as they know how to sup in Paris only, and Mr Rimsdale did not find his appetite at all diminished by his having already dined copiously.

During supper, the Frenchman informed his new acquaintance that, shortly after

his journey to London in the York Union, the senior partner of the principal house for which he travelled had died, and having no natural heirs, had left him the whole of his large fortune.

"I was thus enabled," he added, "to return to my own dear country and purchase the estates and Château de Maravaux. Since I have come back to France, His Majesty has been pleased to decorate me with the *grand cordon* of the Order of St Louis, more, I feel, out of respect for my grandfather's memory than for any merit of my own."

"You are too modest, Monsieur le Marquis," remarked the notary, with an air of great respect, "for such is the title you now go by, I suppose?"

"You are right, my dear sir," replied the other, "for since I am now able to keep up my rank, and am at the same time a peer

of France, there is no longer any reason for my not re-assuming the title, which is, by the by, one of the most ancient in the kingdom."

Mr Rimsdale was by this time so awed by the greatness of his companion, that had he discovered the Marquis to be the heir-apparent to the crown, his feeling of respect could not have been greater.

"How I wish Sophonisba could see me at this moment," he thought, "supping alone with a real live Marquis, who wears a red ribbon over his waistcoat, and who is a peer besides; she would have a much greater respect for me, and would not say that I had wasted my time in Paris." "Times do indeed seem to have come round again," he continued aloud; "your noble ancestor, when he received the unwelcome visit from the mob of Nantes, could have had very little hope of any

one's ever seeing the old nobility again paramount in the country, but now that the nobles have got possession of their former power, or nearly so, I presume they will take good care not to lose it again in a hurry—no more Revolutions to fear at present, I suppose, for things seem to be going in the most quiet and orderly manner."

"I am afraid it is but a delusive calm," said the Marquis, shaking his head; "the King, although an excellent and well-intentioned prince, is surrounded by bad advisers, who are enemies to all progress, and I should not be at all surprised if another sweeping Revolution were preparing; and, depend upon it, should such be the case, it will not be the last, for whether the Republic be again proclaimed, or a member of another branch of the royal family be called to hold the sceptre, such a state of

things will be but transitory. There is a latent love for the memory of the Emperor Napoleon in the hearts of the French people, who will never be content until they have one of his family and name on the throne again, and they may rest assured that in such a case they will find they have caught a Tartar, and changed some King Log of the day for a King Stork. It will, however, be a sad thing when the present state of affairs shall be overthrown, for the French will be merely exchanging their *ancienne noblesse* of birth for the *nouvelle noblesse* of the *comptoir*, and when France shall be in the hands of the *financiers*, adieu to its chivalrous spirit! The power of money will be all and everything in this country, and, as is already the case in England, we shall become a nation of shopkeepers,—but this is serious talking after the Opera, and over a cham-

pagne bottle, and can scarcely be interesting to a foreigner; suppose we take a stroll upon the Boulevards, it is a very fine moonlight night, and in my opinion Paris can never be seen to better advantage than at this hour."

The notary assented to the proposal, as indeed he would have done to any other, and the two gentlemen sallied forth and were soon pacing up and down the Boulevards, which, although they had not at that period attained to their present magnificence, even then formed the finest promenade to be met with in any city of Europe, and in one respect they were superior to what they now are, as, the Revolution of 1830 not having yet taken place, the fine trees planted on either side had not been cut down for the purpose of helping to form barricades.

"It was along these very Boulevards,"

observed the Marquis, as they strolled along, "that my grandfather was borne, in the year 1795, in an open cart with his arms tied behind his back, on his way to the guillotine, in the company of many others as innocent as himself. The more I reflect over the dreadful events that occurred during those unhappy times, the more fervently I pray Heaven that my beloved country may never again be desolated by the evil genius of revolt; although I cannot help fearing that the time is approaching when the streets of Paris will be blocked up by barricades and the people be in arms to defend them; what will be the termination of such violent scenes I am of course unable to prophesy, but, as I have already observed, any future revolution will cause the complete downfall of the ancient nobility, and bring France under the rule of the *financiers*, a

result to be thoroughly deplored, for the aristocracy of birth is an aristocracy far more liberal in its ideas than an aristocracy of money."

At this moment the two gentlemen reached the corner of the Rue de Richelieu, and the windows of the house at the end of the street on the left hand, abutting on the Boulevards, were so brilliantly illuminated, that Mr Rimsdale asked of his companion whether there was not some grand *fête* taking place within.

"That house is illuminated in the same splendid manner every night," replied the Marquis; "it is the noted Frascati, a public licensed gambling-house, open all day and nearly all night throughout the year; it is there that foolish men and women risk their fortune and their honour, in the delusive hope of winning large sums of the future ruler of this country, MONEY."

"I have heard of the place," observed the notary, "and of the fabulous sums daily and nightly lost in its saloons; I have also been told that there are several establishments of the same description in the capital, but as this is my first visit to Paris I have never seen their splendour with my own eyes."

"If you feel that you are sufficiently master of your resolution to refrain from play," said the other, "there is no harm in your walking through the saloons, but you ought to know yourself, although it has been asserted by both ancient and modern philosophers that the knowledge of oneself is what no man possesses. If however you think you can resist temptation I will be your *cicerone*."

Mr Rimsdale felt that nothing could possibly induce him to risk even a five-franc piece on the chances of any known

game; indeed, the utmost extent of the honest notary's exploits in the gambling line consisted in his having occasionally taken a hand at long-whist at penny points, and he remembered a stormy scene that had ensued between him and his wife on the occasion of his having once lost the sum of two shillings at the house of a fellow-notary, when he had to stand a regular tempest of abuse from the mouth of that excellent, though undoubtedly quick-tempered, woman.

The Marquis de Maravaux and his companion, having mounted the magnificent staircase, proceeded to enter the antechamber leading to the gambling saloons, where they had to give up their hats to the porter, each in return receiving a ticket with a number printed on it.

"Why have we been temporarily deprived of our hats?" inquired Mr Rimsdale.

“I have never known for certain the reason of the custom,” replied the Marquis, “but I suppose that it is a precaution against robbery; for instance, if any one were to seize some of the money displayed upon the gaming-tables and run off, he would have to go down the staircase bare-headed, which would probably lead to his detection, as no one is allowed to come here in a cap—mind, that is my own private opinion; anyhow it is a good system, for it saves one the trouble of carrying one’s hat through the crowded rooms, and thus prevents its being crushed.”

The above remarks having been made, they proceeded to enter the splendidly illuminated gambling saloons, in the first of which the game of roulette was being played, and a large crowd was collected round the table, attentively watching the performances of two men, whose appear-

ance and demeanour seemed to afford infinite amusement to the lookers on. On perceiving the two gamesters, Mr Rimsdale at once recognized them as his stout fellow-travellers in the York Union. They were evidently but little accustomed to the game, or, what was more probable, it was the first time they were attempting to gain the favours of the fickle goddess, who in their case had not proved unkind, as a huge pile of gold and bank-notes lay before them. At the moment that the two new-comers entered, the *croupier*, who was turning the wheel, exclaimed in a cold, monotonous tone, "*Vingt, noir, pair et passe,*" and raked away all the money deposited on the different numbers, printed on the centre of the table, with the exception of a good many gold pieces placed on the line which ran below the numbers 19, 20, and 21, by the side of which stake, on the contrary,

several *rouleaux* and a pile of *louis d'or* were deposited.

"We've won again, I declare," cried one of the graziers (in his broadest West Riding dialect), bursting at the same time into a loud laugh, and slapping his fist down upon the table with such force as to shake it to its very foundations; "I say, old chap, just look what a pile of gold them fellows has given us."

And with these words the fortunate players raked away the large sum they had just won into the already overgrown heap that was lying before them on the green cloth.

"I never saw such a continuation of good luck in the whole course of my life," said a gentleman who was looking on, addressing himself to the Marquis, "those two enormously-sized Englishmen have evidently, from their utter ignorance of the

game, never played before ; they did not begin with more than five hundred francs, at least that is all they have risked, for I saw them change the bank-note when they came in, and now they are in a fair way of breaking the bank, '*Aux innocents les mains pleines.*'"

At this moment a loud peal of joyous laughter, resembling a clap of thunder, shook the room ; it issued from the mouth of the two graziers, who had just won another *maximum* stake.

"Drat it, we've won again," cried the one who had already spoken. "I never had such a good haul in all my born days before, it beats cock-fighting."

While the successful gamesters were raking in the enormous stake they had just won, the words of "*Ils ont fait sauter la banque*" were heard in several directions, and the next moment the *croupiers* were ob-

served to cover up the wheel and to rise from their seats, and at the same time some one, evidently an Englishman, whispered a few words in the graziers' ears.

"Why, if we haven't been and broken the bank, that's a good one," said one of them, with a loud chuckle; "I say, old boy, we have won all the money."

It was quite true, the two Yorkshire graziers had broken the roulette bank at Frascati's.

Having scraped together their enormous winnings, the fortunate gamesters proceeded to deposit them in a large canvas bag that was brought to them, and that operation being terminated, Mr Smithers threw the sack over his shoulder and left the room with his friend, refusing the numerous offers made to assist him in carrying his weighty burden.

"Won't we go and have a regular blow-

out!" was the last remark made by them, as the door closed and shut out their vast proportions from the view of those who remained behind.

In the mean while a new bank had been brought and placed upon the table, when play was recommenced as if nothing extraordinary had happened.

The Marquis and Mr Rimsdale took a turn through the next saloon, in which the game of *trente et quarante* was being played. The scene presented a very different aspect from what was going on in the adjoining room, for not a whisper interrupted the words "*Faites votre jeu, Messieurs,*" solemnly pronounced by the *croupier* who dealt the cards.

The notary and his companion did not remain more than a few moments in the second saloon, but soon took their depart-

ure, and having received back their hats, went down once more upon the Boulevards.

“I think you told me that you have taken up your quarters at Meurice’s hotel, in the Rue de Rivoli,” said the Frenchman, as soon as they were outside the play-house. “I will accompany you as far as you are going, as I live in the Rue de Lille in Faubourg St Germain, where I hope to see you as often as you can spare time during your sojourn in Paris. I propose our going down the Rue de Richelieu, as far as the Rue St Honoré, as it will greatly shorten the distance. It is a pity that I sent my carriage home after supper; shall we take a *fiacre*, or do you prefer taking the air after those hot saloons?”

Mr Rimsdale answered that he should prefer walking, and the two gentlemen

turned their steps down the Rue de Richelieu.

They had just arrived opposite to the Rue Neuve St Augustin, when the Marquis suddenly stopped.

"Did you not hear a cry?" he exclaimed.

At the same moment several loud shouts were heard, evidently proceeding from one of the small streets running into the one in which they then were.

CHAPTER XI.

The Marquis de Maravaux and Mr Rimsdale rescue the two stout graziers from a very unpleasant predicament.

"THERE is robbery and murder going on not far off," cried Mr Rimsdale.

"Let us hasten to the assistance of those attacked," added his companion.

With these words they started off with all possible speed towards the spot from which the sounds seemed to proceed, and in a few moments came upon a group consisting of several persons, who were attacking two stout men, whom it did not

require any extraordinary exercise of memory to recognize as the two Yorkshire graziers who had shortly before broken the bank at Frascati's.

"Those men have been followed by some villains, who must have seen them leave with their bag full of money," cried the Frenchman, "we must not allow them to be robbed and perhaps murdered."

With these words he rushed to the scene of encounter, followed by Mr Rimsdale, and the next minute they were both in the thick of the fight, and before long had rendered such good service that the assailants had all taken to flight, with the exception of one, who was held back by the vigorous arm of Mr Smithers. It was in vain that the malefactor attempted to free himself from the grasp of the powerful Yorkshireman, he might as easily have knocked over an elephant.

By this time several agents of police had come up, when the captured man was seized by them and handcuffed.

"Are you much hurt?" inquired the Marquis of the grazier, down whose face the blood was trickling.

"Only a clout on the noddle," was the answer. "But the bag's safe, and that's all I care about; as for myself, that doesn't go for much, but I shouldn't have liked to lose the money."

The stout Yorkshireman had not let go his hold on the precious canvas bag during the fiercest of the fight.

They all now turned their steps, preceded by the police agents leading the prisoner, to the nearest guard-house, where a surgeon, who had been sent for, examined the hurts of the two graziers, when it was discovered that Mr Smithers had been much more maltreated by his assailants than his

companion, who indeed had not received any blow of consequence.

“He will be quite right again in a few days,” observed the medical man, as he finished plastering the forehead and occiput of the lusty Yorkshireman; “I never met with such a thick skull before,” he added, “it seems nearly bullet proof.”

Having finished his surgical operations, he desired that his patient should at once be taken to his hotel, recommending that he should be kept very quiet for the next few days, and be restricted to a very low diet, and that he should take especial care to abstain from all alcoholic liquors during the whole of that time.

“What, not even one single glass of cognac and water, hot with?” asked the grazier, with an air of great disgust, of the Marquis, who had translated the orders of the surgeon to him, Mr Smithers’ know-

ledge of languages being confined to the dialect spoken in his native county.

"Why, surely one single glass, not too strong, wouldn't hurt me?"

"Not a single drop," replied the surgeon, on the request of his patient being explained; "pray tell him that the more strictly he adheres to the regimen I have set down, the sooner will he be all right again; I will visit him every day until he is convalescent."

The stout grazier grumbled excessively at the severity of the surgeon's orders, but brightened up a little on learning that his forced state of temperance would be of very short duration.

"When I get right again," he very sensibly observed, "I can make up for lost time."

The attention of those assembled was now called to the prisoner, who proved

to be respectably dressed, and was recognized by the police agents as an Englishman who had of late been seen walking about several of the gaming-tables of the Capital, looking at the play.

On the head functionary at the guard-house putting several questions to him, he seemed to be much overcome by shame, and covered his face with his hands.

"That man is no hardened villain," observed the Marquis to Mr Rimsdale, "I should not be surprised if this were not his *début* as a criminal, his appearance is decidedly respectable, and he seems thoroughly overcome by his degraded position."

"I have seen his face before in very different circumstances, I am sure," answered Mr Rimsdale.

The agents of police here proceeded to request the two gentlemen to give them their names and addresses, informing them

that their attendance would be required the next morning at the residence of the wounded man, at an hour that was named, as the Commissary of Police for the quarter would come and examine the prisoner there, and that the evidence of the Marquis and Mr Rimsdale would be necessary.

The criminal was then locked up in one of the cells of the guard-house, and the two gentlemen left the spot and returned to their respective residences.

On the following morning they both proceeded to the hotel where Mr Smithers had taken up his quarters, and as, on entering the Yorkshireman's room, they found that the Commissary of Police had just arrived, bringing with him the prisoner in the custody of two *gendarmes*, the examination was immediately commenced.

On the criminal being questioned, he at once made a full confession of his guilt.

"He was present," he said, "when the two graziers had broken the roulette bank at Frascati's on the previous evening, and having left the saloons immediately afterwards with several companions, it had been proposed to ease the two stout men of their burden, and he and his companions having come up with the successful gamblers had fallen upon them."

"What are your means of existence?" inquired the Commissary, after having taken down the name and confession of the accused.

"About eighteen months ago," returned the man, who spoke French with tolerable fluency, "I was in easy, not to say affluent circumstances, but I was totally ruined by the villainy of a wretch to whom I had confided the whole of my fortune. Curses on that scoundrel Macpherson," he added, in English, clenching his fist with

desperation ; “ had it not been for his bolting I should have lived and died an honest man.”

“ Another of that vile attorney’s victims,” thought Mr Rimsdale ; “ poor fellow, I cannot help pitying him.”

The accused then proceeded to give a detailed account of how he had intrusted the whole of his fortune to the care of Macpherson, and how the attorney had decamped with all.

“ I tried for a time to get my living honestly in my own country, but not succeeding in procuring any employment suited to my capacity, I at length came over to this country, where I was for a short time engaged as a clerk, but my employers having failed, I was thrown upon my own resources, when I formed the acquaintance of some companions, who, being without any ostensible means of existence,

lived upon their wits ; we were never however engaged in the commission of any violent act until yesterday night. I had been drinking rather freely, and did not sufficiently reflect upon the great criminality of the deed we attempted to commit until it was too late. I am however truly happy that no lives were lost ; at least I have no blood on my conscience."

"What are the names of your accomplices, and where are they to be found?" inquired the Commissary.

"I am no informer," exclaimed the prisoner sturdily. "I confess to having acted criminally myself, and I am perfectly aware that I merit punishment, but I will never blab against any one with the hope of being let off more easily ; I am no cowardly peach."

"Your wishing to screen your accomplices, though a certainly respectable sen-

timent, will not avail them much," observed the Commissary, in a firm but by no means harsh manner; "the police will soon discover with whom you have of late associated, and it will be easily found out in whose company you left Frascati's last night."

"That concerns the police, sir," answered the accused, respectfully, "but I will never turn informer."

The Commissary, having heard and taken down the evidence of the Marquis and the notary, directed the criminal to be taken to the prison of the Prefecture, there to await his examination by a *juge d'instruction*, previous to his being sent to trial.

"Curses on that Macpherson," exclaimed the man as he was led away, "he is the cause of all."

Having received the compliments of the Commissary for their courageous conduct,

and the thanks of the two graziers for their having come to their rescue and saved their money, the Marquis and Mr Rimsdale took their departure.

“It is terrible to think of the fatal consequences the villainy of one man may occasion,” said Mr Rimsdale to the Marquis, when they were in the street; and after having given him a short account of the absconding of the attorney from London he continued, “The rascality of that Macpherson is producing its fruits; who knows but that many other of his victims have sunk into infamy? I now perfectly remember the man whose examination has just taken place. I have done business for him in London more than once, at a time when he was in good circumstances, and a more naturally honourable person could not have been met with. What do you think will be done to him?”

"Why," returned de Maravaux, "as he will very probably get the benefit of the jury declaring that there are extenuating circumstances in his case, he will, perhaps, be let off with a few years at the galleys; but it is an ill wind that blows no one good, you will be required to attend as a witness at the trial, which will take place in about three months, and I shall therefore have the pleasure of seeing you again at Paris."

To be brief, after having transacted all the business that had called him over to the French capital to his thorough satisfaction, Mr Rimsdale returned to London, when, as his name had appeared in the newspapers in conjunction with such a great personage as the Marquis de Maravaux, *Grand Cordon* of the Order of St Louis, and a peer of France, while his courageous conduct had been much praised by the cor-

respondents of the different journals, and in addition, as he came back with a goodly sum of money in his pockets, he was received with open arms by the amiable Sophonisba, and when the time arrived for his return to Paris, for the purpose of giving evidence at the trial of the Englishman who had been captured while attacking the graziers, his going met with no opposition from the partner of his bosom.

We will not, however, give any lengthened account of the worthy notary's second visit to Paris, we will merely notice that at the trial, the prisoner, whose name was John Betterton, was found guilty, but having been allowed by the jury the benefit of extenuating circumstances, was only sentenced to be branded in the pillory, and to pass five years at the galleys, while his accomplices, who had been discovered and had not obtained the same benefit of ex-

tenuating circumstances, were condemned to twenty years of the same punishment.

“D—n that scoundrel Macpherson,” muttered John Betterton, as forming one of a chain of convicts he started on a not very agreeable foot-journey for the seaport of Toulon, “how I wish I had him by the throat; but who knows that one of these days I may not be able to pay off old scores?”

There seemed, it must be confessed, at that time little likelihood of the unhappy convict ever meeting with the author of his ruin; for, at that very moment, Mr Macpherson was seated at a well-spread breakfast-table, in a splendid house at New York, in which city the ex-attorney was carrying on business as a merchant, the large funds with which he had absconded having allowed of his setting up in a very extensive

way. Of course, being rich, he was generally respected.

Little probability as there existed of Macpherson ever meeting with John Betterton, one of his numerous victims, they did meet once again, after a long lapse of years, and—but we will not anticipate.

“Poor Paulina Worthington,” thought the kind-hearted notary, as he returned to his hotel at the conclusion of the trial, “had you not fortunately met with friends when you arrived in London, you would have been thrown helpless upon the cold, heartless world, and it is dreadful to think of what might have been the consequences, still, I will be sworn that your innocent, virtuous, staunch heart would have stood firm and prevented you from falling. I wonder where the poor girl is at present?” he continued, reflecting as he

walked along; "I heard lately from Lord Forestdale that she had quitted her situation at Lady Forestdale's, and that he was quite ignorant of her present movements; but wherever she may be, I am sure that she has and will remain pure and unspotted. Happy, indeed, will be the man who shall call her wife."

And with an involuntary sigh, as he contrasted his own connubial state with that of the husband of such an angelic girl as Paulina Worthington, the worthy notary proceeded to make the necessary arrangements for his return to his London home, and the society of the partner he had chosen for life.

In the diligence in which he journeyed to Calais, one of his fellow-passengers proved to be Mr Montgomery Pops, who had been fulfilling an engagement at Paris with an English company. The young artist was

alone, having, as he mentioned, parted some time before with Mr Cockle, in consequence of the latter having got an engagement in the West Indies.

“He will find it hot work, quoting Shakespeare in those southern latitudes,” continued Mr Pops, “rather different from the night we first had the honour of meeting with you, sir, when we were your fellow-travellers in the York Union; he was going out very comfortably, however, as I saw him safely on board a man-of-war which was just weighing anchor at Plymouth.”

“On board a man-of-war?” observed Mr Rimsdale.

“Yes, sir; it appears that some great man, whose name I cannot remember for the moment, but who was a Colonel and a Lord’s son, got him a passage out. I saw

him, as I have already observed, safely on board. By-the-by, what odd coincidences do occur in life, quite as extraordinary as any on the stage,—but truth is stranger than fiction; here we are met together in a foreign diligence, while Cockle had as a fellow-passenger the same handsome young lady whom we took up at that town in Lincolnshire, and who journeyed with us all the way to London. She was indeed as beautiful a young creature as mortal man could wish to set eyes on.”

“What!” exclaimed Mr Rimsdale, in great astonishment, “you saw her on board a man-of-war, just setting sail for the West Indies? Surely you must have been mistaken?”

“Oh! no, sir,” returned the artist, “for I spoke to the young lady, and wished her a safe voyage over the sea.”

“Do you know why and with whom she was going out?” inquired the notary.

“No, sir,” answered the other, “only she was leaning on the arm of the same great gentleman who had got Cockle the passage on board, and who, I thought, looked very sweet upon her, and, if I am not mistaken, she did not look bitter upon him.”

This announcement caused Mr Rimsdale the greatest surprise. “Can Paulina Worthington have fallen?” he thought. “Oh! no, that is impossible, such an angelic and noble-hearted girl can never have forgotten herself so far. Still—oh, if such be the case, that will make another victim for which the villain Macpherson will have to answer when he appears before the judgment-seat of his Creator,—but,

no! a thousand times no!—it cannot be possible; Paulina Worthington can never have acted otherwise than as if her path through life had been traced by an angel.”

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

In which the reader meets with some old and new acquaintances.

ABOUT six o'clock in the evening, at the commencement of January, 1827, the parlour of Longmoor Rectory was occupied by two persons, the elder of whom was the Reverend Mr Pearson, the respectable rector of the parish, the other was a young man of about five-and-twenty years of age, whose bronzed countenance gave sure evidence of its having been long exposed to the burning rays of a tropical sun.

He was tall and very good-looking, and, though dressed in plain clothes, there was a frank, daring look about him, peculiar to men-of-war's seamen; and at the same time he had that polished, gentleman-like air that denoted that, if a sailor, he was certainly an officer.

On the table before the two persons just alluded to were lying a newspaper and a letter, over the contents of which they frequently cast their eyes with a mournful shake of the head, and they also more than once glanced at the dial of a mahogany clock which stood in a corner of the room.

The newspaper, which had been printed and published in Calcutta, contained a long account of the robbery and murder of the Honourable Colonel William Langley, C.B., and his escort, by the Pindarees, while that distinguished officer was return-

ing to Calcutta, on sick leave, in consequence of a severe wound he had received a short time previously during a skirmish with one of those lawless tribes.

The letter was dated from London two days before ; its contents were as follows :

“ MY DEAR AND WORTHY FRIEND,

“ I arrived in London with my child from Penzance last night, and found your kind letter waiting for me. It is with feelings of the most unbounded gratitude that I intend to avail myself of your hospitable invitation to take up my abode, for the present, at the Rectory. I shall start from hence to-morrow by the York Union, and, God willing, shall reach the ‘ Piebald Horse ’ on the evening of the following day.

“ My dear boy has borne the long and tedious voyage from India most wonder-

fully, and is in excellent health. His likeness to his poor dear father increases every day. I fervently thank Heaven for the consolation that has been granted me by the birth and preservation of my own beloved Walter. It is, perhaps, verging on impiety to make such an assertion, but I cannot help owning that I feel assured that, had it not been for my child, I should have had neither strength nor courage to bear up against the heavy calamities with which it has pleased Divine Providence to chasten me.

“ Hoping to find you in perfect health, I wish you farewell until our speedy meeting.

“ Your affectionate friend,

“ PAULINA LANGLEY.

“ P.S. I do not intend informing the members of my late husband's family of

my arrival, until after I shall have seen you, for I wish to have your valuable advice as to the best manner in which our secret union ought to be notified to them, for I have every reason for supposing that they are still in ignorance of our marriage.

“As there is a member of parliament in the hotel, who has been kind enough to give me a frank, I have been able to put two letters into one envelope, pray therefore give the enclosed to dear George, with my best love.”

“Poor dear Paulina,” observed the young man, as they perused the letters for the twentieth time, “how much she has suffered for one so young!”

“Two-and-twenty years have not yet passed over her head, and she is a widow,”

sighed the clergyman; "those whom God loveth He chasteneth."

"Oh! that scoundrel Macpherson!" cried the young man fiercely, "his atrocious villainy may truly be termed the root and cause of all the misery that has fallen upon the head of my unhappy sister. Had it not been for his absconding with all our fortune, Paulina would never have entered the Langley family in the humble capacity that compelled her to keep her union with Colonel Langley a secret from his relations. Had she never met with her late husband, how much wretchedness would she have been spared. May every curse light upon the head of that vile attorney!"

"Nay, George Worthington," exclaimed the rector, somewhat sternly, "do not give way to such angry feelings;

remember that our Lord hath told us to 'bless them who have done us evil.' Instead of cursing Mr Macpherson, hope rather that Heaven will so bless him that his heart will turn to repentance."

"And that he prove the sincerity of his repentance by making most ample restitution to those he so shamefully plundered," suggested the young man ; "there is, however, very little if any chance of such being the case, for you may rest assured the fellow will never repent of his wickedness, unless he squanders away all his spoil, and in that case his repentance will profit no one but himself. But time passes, had we not better be soon thinking of starting for the 'Piebald Horse?'"

"We have nearly an hour before us yet," returned Mr Pearson, "even supposing the coach arrives at its time, and of that there is little probability, as at this

season of the year the roads are in a very bad state. I have, however, directed Abel to have the car at the door of the inn at seven o'clock. As for ourselves, we will walk down thither, as it is a fine moonlight night, and the frost has set in."

"Dear Paulina, how I long to embrace her!" said Worthington; "poor, sweet sister, she once could have had no hope of ever setting her eyes upon my face again in this world."

"Yours was indeed a wonderful, a miraculous escape," observed the rector.

"Ay! you may well say so," continued the young man, "several hours on a spar, in the midst of a sea running mountains high; it was indeed a miracle that I was able to grasp the rope of that merchant ship, and be hauled on board without having my brains dashed out against the sides of the vessel."

“It was, however, a very long while before the news of your marvellous escape reached England, and during that time we mourned you as one dead.”

“There were, as you well know, no means of letting you know that I was still alive, for the vessel by which I was taken up was bound for Sydney, and during the whole of the remainder of her passage out we never spoke another ship.”

“And when you at length reached England, what bad news awaited you,—the death of your uncle and the loss of your fortune.”

“And in addition to those calamities,” added the young sailor, bitterly, “it was enough to make one’s blood boil with indignation to have met with such treatment as I did at the Admiralty; oh! I shall never forget, were I to live a thousand years, the cold, freezing manner in which I

was thanked for having saved, at the hazard of my life, the finest frigate in the British navy. It was in vain that I attempted to get promotion, for I possessed neither influence nor fortune. I tell you what, sir," continued the young man with increasing bitterness, "it is useless for any one in the British naval service to hope to get on without having paramount interest at the Admiralty. Were a man to save the whole British Navy from perdition, he would obtain no promotion, unless he had some influential personage to push him forward; while, on the other hand, the veriest lubber, who combines utter ignorance with the most abject cowardice, provided he be the relation or the *protégé* of some great man, is sure of promotion. To wit, a mate of the *Warrior*, who, while I was risking my life, as it was my duty to do, stood trembling by, without moving

hand or foot in aid of the ship, was made a lieutenant immediately after the frigate returned home. I afterwards served under him for nearly two years, when he was promoted to the rank of commander, and in another year he will be posted, while I still remain a poor, friendless mate; but then, although he scarcely knows one rope from another, he is the son of a Lord of the Admiralty."

"Alas!" observed the rector, "it always was so, and I am afraid always will be so; interest before merit in this world. Thank God, such is not the case in His heavenly kingdom, where every man will be rewarded according to his works."

"In consequence of the infamous treatment I have met with," continued Worthington, "I have at last come to a resolution. The ship in which I have been serving for the last two years has been

paid off, and I do not intend to remain any longer in the service."

"But have you thoroughly calculated the consequences of such a decisive step?"

"Thoroughly, for perceiving it to be useless for me to expect promotion, I have been trying to get the command of a merchant ship, and I have every hope of receiving an appointment to a magnificent vessel bound for Madras."

"After all, you may be acting for the best," said the clergyman; "for, if after your gallant conduct off the coast of South America, the Admiralty did not promote you, there is little if any chance of your getting on during peace time in the service, the upper grades of which are entirely set aside for the *protégés* of those who are possessed of interest at the Admiralty."

"In a few days," observed Worthington, as they rose for the purpose of pro-

ceeding to the inn, "I expect a decisive answer from the owners of the *Hindustan*, a vessel of nine hundred tons burthen; if their letter be favourable, I shall at once close with the offer."

About half an hour after the above conversation had taken place, the "Piebald Horse" Inn presented nearly the same appearance as it had done about three years previously. In the entrance passage was a group of four persons, composed of Mr Aaron Jobs, the head-waiter, Abel, the aged servant of the late Colonel Melville, and the chambermaid and boots of the inn.

"And so she be returning," said Mr Jobs, "after three years' absence, a lone widow, with a orphan child. Did I not say, Mister Abel, when she departed hence this very night come three years ago, that

you oughts to have gone with her to that Babylonious city?"

"But Miss Worthington, I beg pardon, I mean the Honourable Mrs Langley," returned Abel, "has been much further nor Lunnun town, right indeed to t'other end of the world, where her husband was killed by the savages."

"Lor!" exclaimed the chambermaid, "I hopes as they didn't go a-eating of him."

"No," said the old servant, "it appears as how his corpus was gotten away from the cannibals and given Christian burial. It's however a sad thing, for one so young to be left a lone widow, the more so as I hears she almost worshipped her husband."

"Was he not a lord's son?" inquired Mr Jobs.

"Yes! and a officer colonel besides,"

replied the old man, "but had he been a Royal King he wouldn't have been too grand for my poor dear young missus, God bless her!"

"Be she a-going to settle in these parts again?" asked the waiter. "I hopes she won't be a-thinking of going back to Lun-nun town; once in a-way is surely quite enough, without a-tempting of Providence a second time."

"As far as I can learn," said Abel, "Mrs Langley is going to make a long stay at the rectory."

"So much the better," observed the chambermaid; "and, pray now, Mr Abel, should she ever seem to a have a bit of a wish to go again to that city of Babylonious wolves and ravenous beasts, as Mr Aaron calls it, do try and persuade her to stay here out of harm's way: you be grandly given with the power of advising, Mister Abel."

The conversation of the little group was here interrupted by the entrance of Mr Pearson and George Worthington, who, having returned the respectful salutes of the waiter and his companions, proceeded to enter the bar.

"How glad and happy your lady will be to see her brother again, after having so long mourned him as dead and gone," said the chambermaid to the old domestic, when the two gentlemen had passed. "What a pity it would have been had such a fine young man a-been cut off in the prime of his life!"

"He is indeed a handsome-looking chap," remarked the boots; "and his Wellingtons are the best made and brightest I ever see; I wonder where he gets his blacking; if he didn't happen to think it too great a liberty like, I should just wish to ask him a question on the subject."

“ Oh ! Mr George Worthington hasn’t a atom of pride about him,” returned Abel, “and would answer a servant or a working man just as politely as if he was a-speaking to a justice of the peace or the High Sheriff of the county. Were he what he ought to be, he’d a-be a Lord Grand Admiral of a ship a hundred times as big as this house.”

“ It’s a pity he always looks so sad,” said Mr Jobs, “ I never have seen him smile as I can recollect.”

“ Perhaps he be in love,” cried the chambermaid.

“ And the lady won’t have him,” echoed the boots.

“ That isn’t likely, at all,” retorted the chambermaid ; “ if so he be in love, it’s not the lady’s fault they isn’t married. But there’s the horn a-blowing.”

“ Yes, it be the coach a-coming,” ex-

claimed the boots, "I hears it a-crunching through the frozen snow."

"And with it comes my dear young missus," cried Abel; "thanks be to Almighty God for allowing these old eyes to be refreshed with a sight of her sweet face again!"

A few minutes afterwards Paulina Langley was weeping on the breast of her brother, but her tears were not altogether those of sorrow.

How could they be? Was she not embracing one, whom she had long mourned as dead, and the sight of whom brought back the remembrance of the happy days of her childhood? And that infant she bears in her arms, it has not been awakened by the bustle of the arrival, but it sleeps calmly upon its mother's bosom. A brother! an old valued friend, and a child! Oh, no! Paulina Langley, although a widow—

widowed indeed almost before the first kisses imprinted on her lips by her husband were dried—could not call herself desolate ; and, as she gazed alternately upon her brother, her child, and the rector, she mentally thanked Heaven for having, in His infinite mercy, granted her so much consolation in the midst of the many and heavy afflictions with which she had been chastened.

That evening Paulina felt happier, or rather less sorrowful, than she had done since the moment she had learned the melancholy death of her husband, and for the first time since that sad event she spoke freely, and even with animation.

After supper, when they were seated by the fire-side talking of by-gone days and times to come, the young naval officer inquired of his sister whether, during her short stay in London, she had taken any

steps towards demanding the pension she was entitled to, as the widow of a colonel killed while on active service. In answer to this question his sister remarked that, previous to making the application, it would be necessary to procure a fresh copy of her marriage certificate, as the one she had received from the clergyman who had performed the marriage ceremony was among the baggage that had been plundered and carried off by the Pindarees.

“If you will tell me at what church you were married,” said her brother, “I will manage the rest for you; all I shall require will be your signature to the application you will send to the War Office.”

“I was not married to my poor William in a church,” returned Paulina, “but on board a man-of-war, by the chaplain of the ship, in the presence of the captain.”

“What was the name of the vessel?”

inquired her brother, taking out his pocket-book in order to note down the answer.

"The *Nemesis* frigate," answered the young widow, tears starting to her eyes, as she recalled to mind the ceremony that had united her to one she had so dearly loved and so deeply mourned.

"The *Nemesis* !" exclaimed her brother, placing his hand to his head, as if he were making a calculation. "The *Nemesis* ! how long since, and where was the ship navigating at the time ?" he continued, as his brow became contracted and his under lip fell, showing his teeth closely clenched together.

"Exactly two years and three months ago," said Paulina, not remarking her brother's agitation, "on our voyage out to Madeira. The reason of our being married on board a ship on the high seas was in order to insure greater secrecy, for it

was evident that should Lady Forestdale ascertain that her son had espoused her daughter's governess and companion, she would never forgive him. You are aware, my dear sir, for I wrote to you on the subject," she continued, addressing the rector, "for how long a time I refused to acquiesce to the wishes of my late husband, and sorely was I tried by what I considered my duty on one hand and my feelings on the other; I remained, however, firm to my resolve of refusing to be married to him without his mother's sanction, until at length Colonel Langley's regiment was ordered out to India. Oh! then it was that I felt how fondly, how devotedly I loved him, and at length I yielded a half-reluctant consent to his supplications that I would become his wife and accompany him to the East Indies. The manner in which our hands were joined was as follows: Colonel

Langley had procured leave to go as far as Madeira in the *Nemesis*, a frigate commanded by an intimate friend of his, and bound to the West Indies. He was to remain in the island until the arrival of the transport in which he was to proceed to Calcutta. It was arranged that I should give up the situation I held in Lady Forestdale's house, and privately accompany him on board the frigate, in order that the marriage ceremony should be performed as soon as we were on the high seas. All this took place as was previously arranged. We were married in the captain's cabin by the chaplain of the ship, in the presence of its commander, the first and second lieutenants, and a poor dramatic artist, to whom a passage out to Jamaica had been accorded through the intervention of Colonel Langley. On reaching Madeira, my husband and myself quitted the frigate,

which set sail on its voyage across the Atlantic as soon as we had been lowered into the boat that took us and some despatches ashore. We were indeed the only persons who landed from the ship. We remained at Madeira about three weeks. Oh! I shall never forget that happy time! The transport which was to convey us to the East Indies at length arrived, and we left the delightful island, which will ever live in my remembrance."

While his sister was speaking, George Worthington became every moment more and more agitated, and on her bringing her narrative to a conclusion he started to his feet and covered his face with his hands.

"What is the matter with you, my dear George," cried the rector in astonishment, "are you ill?"

Worthington uncovered his face at

these words, it was white as that of a corpse.

"Sister," he exclaimed, "are you sure it was the *Nemesis* frigate, on board of which you were married to Colonel Langley?"

"Certainly," was the answer, made in a tone of the utmost surprise; "but why do you ask me such a question?"

"Why?" ejaculated the young man, "why? Because on her voyage out, after leaving Madeira, the *Nemesis* foundered in a hurricane, and every soul on board was lost. Mark me, Paulina, every single soul on board, not one was saved, for the ship was seen to founder, and no help could be afforded to her ill-fated crew."

"Horrible!" cried his sister,

"Yes, horrible indeed," continued Worthington, "for a more gallant captain and ship's company never trod the decks

of a British man-of-war. But, sister," he added, almost shrieking as he spoke, "reflect an instant and you will perceive how fatal that shipwreck will prove to your future prospects, for with the loss of the *Nemesis*, every means, every hope of proving your marriage with your late husband is lost for ever."

"Gracious Heaven! my child, my poor child!" cried Paulina, in an agony of despair, "what is to become of my child?"

CHAPTER II.

Lord Forestdale appears in a much more favourable light than hitherto.

SEVERAL days after the event related in the preceding chapter, a hackney-coach containing two gentlemen drove up about one o'clock in the afternoon to a door in Berkeley Square.

"Is Lord Forestdale at home?" inquired the elder of the two persons, of the porter.

"His Lordship is in the house," returned the servant, in a very civil tone, notwithstanding the hackney-coach, "but

I am not certain whether or not he is visible yet."

"Any how, let these cards be carried up to his Lordship," said the gentleman, "and please to inform him that Mr George Worthington and the Reverend Mr Pearson request an interview upon very important business."

In a few minutes the porter returned with a servant in livery, who informed the rector that the Earl of Forestdale would be most happy to receive the two visitors.

At this invitation Mr Pearson and George Worthington proceeded to follow the lacquey up a magnificent staircase, and were ushered into a luxuriously-furnished apartment, where they were immediately joined by the noble owner of the mansion.

"I beg to apologize for disturbing your Lordship," said the clergyman, as soon as the usual salutations had taken place, "but

what I have to mention is of such an important nature, that I am sure you will excuse our visit."

"There is no necessity for excusing yourself, my dear sir," returned the Earl, who had previously met Mr Pearson, when the latter had called upon Paulina at Lady Forestdale's house, and had made his acquaintance there, "for a visit from you is at any time both a pleasure and an honour."

"Your Lordship is very kind," said the clergyman, who then proceeded to give the nobleman a full account of all that had occurred with respect to Colonel Langley and Paulina Worthington.

Lord Forestdale listened attentively while the clergyman was speaking; by the play of his countenance it was evident that he was taking no slight interest in the narrative, and on its being brought to a close, tears were observable in his eyes.

"Poor, dear William," he exclaimed, mournfully, "why did he not confide in me? He ought surely to have known that I would have stood his staunch friend in this as in any other case."

"I am convinced of the truth of what you say, my Lord," returned Worthington; "my sister has often informed me that the late Colonel Langley ever spoke of you in the most affectionate terms."

"Poor, dear William!" said the Earl, "he was indeed a noble-hearted, fine fellow, whose only fault consisted in not having placed sufficient confidence in me. Had he but told me all, how much unhappiness would have been prevented! From what I have just heard, sir," he continued, addressing George Worthington, "I understand that my late brother's widow is your sister."

"Thank you, my Lord, for that word,"

exclaimed the young man, "for by speaking of my sister as the *widow* of the late Colonel Langley, you evidently entertain no doubt of the marriage having really taken place."

"Doubt! I doubt for a single moment the virtue of Paulina Worthington? Oh! no; a purer-minded woman never yet breathed on the face of God's earth."

As the Earl gave utterance to the above words, Worthington started to his feet, and grasping the nobleman's hand, he rung it with a convulsive shake.

"May Heaven bless you, my Lord," he exclaimed, as soon as his feelings allowed him to speak, "God grant that it may be as easy to convince the world at large as your Lordship."

"Anyhow, my dear sir," responded Lord Forestdale, "there is not any particular necessity for the world having any

reason for doubt, for why should the validity of Mrs Langley's marriage become a subject for discussion ?”

“In order to be able to apply for her pension, as the widow of a colonel,” said the young man, “it will be necessary to produce the certificate of her marriage, and that certificate my sister cannot show, for all proof of her marriage is at the bottom of the Atlantic.”

“But there is no need of her applying for a pension,” observed the nobleman.

“I beg pardon, my Lord,” returned the young man, “but, to confess the truth, our circumstances are not such as—”

“Do you think that I would allow my sister-in-law to be unprovided for ?” cried the Earl, with great energy ; “as long as she lives she shall never know a moment's privation. No thanks, my dear friends, permit me to have the honour of

so calling you,—no thanks, I am merely performing my duty. Allow me, however, to request you both to remain here for a short time, while I drive to my mother's house and inform her of what has happened, in order that she may receive Mrs William Langley as her daughter, which, unless I be much mistaken in the goodness of her heart, it will at once prompt her to do. Excuse my leaving you, I shall not be absent more than an hour at most. In the mean while, pray look upon this house as yours."

With these words he left the room.

"How much one may be mistaken in the estimation one forms of a person's disposition," said the young sailor, as soon as he was alone with the rector; "from what I had heard about the dissipated character of Lord Forestdale, I little expected to find him possessed of such a fine,

generous heart; henceforth I will never form an opinion of any one on hearsay."

After the lapse of nearly an hour, Lord Forestdale returned. There was a cloud upon his brow, which proved that he had met with some unexpected annoyance, and his appearance was that of a man who had just taken an active part in some violent discussion of a most disagreeable nature.

"I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news, gentlemen," he said as soon as he had closed the door, "my mission has not been attended with success, for Lady Forestdale refuses to acknowledge her son's widow as her daughter. It is in vain that I have made every possible appeal to her feelings, for notwithstanding all my efforts she continues obdurate, and I am afraid that nothing will soften her heart, as her mind is labouring under a completely mistaken impression."

The nobleman did not inform his visitors that the haughty dowager had heaped the most unfeeling and virulent abuse upon Paulina, calling that noble-minded woman an upstart minx and a designing hussey, and adding that she did not believe a single word about a marriage having been celebrated. He did not either acquaint them with the fact that Lady Clara Langley had echoed her mother's abuse, and declared that she would sooner die than accord the appellation of sister to one who in her opinion had been no better than the mistress of her poor, dear dead brother. "For," she had added, "I do not think it possible for William, while in his senses, to have so disgraced himself and his family as to have conferred his name upon such a creature."

"And even had poor William so far forgotten himself," Lady Forestdale had

observed, as a clenching remark, "it would not make the very slightest difference in my behaviour towards the woman, for I will never receive either the mother or her brat into my house."

Perceiving after a long and angry discussion that it would prove a hopeless task to attempt prevailing upon his mother and sister to act as Christians, Lord Forestdale returned to his mansion in Berkeley Square, while the Dowager and Lady Clara Langley drove to St James's Church for the purpose of hearing a charity sermon, by which they afterwards expressed themselves much edified.

During his drive home the nobleman reflected seriously over the best course to be pursued with regard to Paulina and her child; he had almost decided upon inviting her to take up her abode with himself and his wife (for he had been married

about the same time as his deceased brother); still, although he did not himself feel the very slightest doubt as to the truth of the marriage, he felt thoroughly aware that by receiving the mother and her son into his house, he would be exposing the former to continual slights, not to say insults, on the part of those who might be determined to wilfully disbelieve the fact of any nuptial ceremony having been performed, and he also reflected that although his own wife was a woman of kindly disposition, still she was not unlikely to be swayed by the sarcasms of his mother and sisters.

There was another reason also which decided the Earl upon not inviting Paulina to become an inmate of his house. He felt assured that she could never be able to forget the outrageous scene that had taken place at his villa near Richmond, when but

for the timely arrival of the two comedians her ruin would have been inevitably effected.

“I was a brute,” he mentally ejaculated, “a vile, heartless brute, to offer violence to the purity of that truly virtuous girl, and my only excuse, if excuse it can be called, was, that I had in the course of my life been witness of so much acting, by women who pretended to possess the virtue of which they were in reality deficient, that I was led to regard as a comedy all resistance to my offers; still, had I been possessed of a single iota of penetration, I should have at once perceived that the heart of Paulina Worthington was as pure as the driven snow. By Jove, I am becoming quite poetical, but that is not to be wondered at, for the very remembrance of what Paulina was, when I first met with her, is sufficient to inspire the mind of the

veriest boor. Would that I could recall that time, for instead of attempting to make her my mistress, I would at once offer her my hand. I was then completely my own master, and with all due deference to the excellent qualities of the present Lady Forestdale, Paulina Worthington would in every respect, excepting rank and fortune, have made a better wife for me. But I am married and cannot unmarry myself—lucky and most sensible fellows those Turks.”

As the nobleman arrived at this conclusion, his carriage pulled up before the door of his house in Berkeley Square.

The excellent rector of Moorfields shook his head as he listened to Lord Forestdale’s account of his mother’s decided refusal to acknowledge Mrs Langley as her daughter-in-law.

“I was afraid of such a result, and

indeed almost expected it," he observed; "it was nevertheless proper that an attempt should be made to induce the relations of the late Colonel Langley to acknowledge his widow and orphan child."

"One relation, who is the head of the family, does acknowledge them," said the Earl, "and does not intend to confine his acknowledgment to mere formal words. Will you have the kindness to inform your sister, Mrs Langley," he continued, addressing George Worthington, "that my bankers, Messrs Sterling and Co. of Lombard Street, will pay to her order the sum of a thousand pounds a year, either monthly or quarterly, as she may desire. As for her son, his education will be at my charge, and I wish it to be expressly understood that I desire that education to be such as he is entitled to, as the nephew of an English peer. Will you also request my

sister-in-law to accept of this, as I am afraid poor William did not die overwhelmed with that great necessary of life, ready money."

With these words, he wrote out a cheque for a thousand pounds, and placed it in the hands of the young sailor.

Worthington felt tears of gratitude rise to his eyelids as he received these solid proofs of the generosity of the Earl of Forestdale, while Mr Pearson rose to his feet, and raising his hands, exclaimed:

"May Heaven bless your Lordship for this truly Christian conduct!"

"I am afraid," observed the nobleman, with a smile, "that there are many persons who deny my having any Christian principle whatever; for my part, however, I prefer plain acting and doing to professing, and if that be not Christianity, I know not what is."

Whatever the clergyman might have thought of Lord Forestdale's notions of religion, it was impossible for him, after that nobleman's generous conduct, to do otherwise than incline his head meekly, as he prepared to take his leave.

"One moment more, if you please," said the Earl, as his visitors were about to retire; "are you not," he added, addressing the young sailor, "the same George Worthington who was believed to have perished, just after he had succeeded in saving the *Warrior* frigate from being totally lost off the coast of South America about three years ago?"

"I had the honour, my Lord," returned Worthington, "of being one of those who went aloft on that occasion."

"You are far too modest," observed Lord Forestdale, "it was through your courage only, and chiefly through your

exertions, that the ship and crew were saved from destruction. Might I ask you whether the Admiralty have taken any proper notice of your gallant conduct on that occasion?"

"Alas! I was a poor mate without interest to push me forward," replied the young man, "and your Lordship must of course be aware that, such being the case, I could not possibly hope for promotion. So utterly indeed am I without any chance of getting on in the naval service, that it is my intention to quit it."

"Such a deplorable circumstance shall never happen if I can possibly prevent it," said the Earl; "leave your case in my hands, and I will see whether my interest at the Admiralty may not be of some service to you."

"You are determined to overwhelm us with kindness, my Lord," cried the de-

lighted young man; "my chief hope and desire is that Heaven may some day place it in my power to prove the extent of my gratitude."

"Do not mention it," said the nobleman, "I shall be merely exerting myself in order to save the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty from the disgrace of passing over the claims of a most meritorious officer. Shame on the English government, that with it, brave and gallant services, unassisted by powerful interest, should avail nothing. But such has, I am afraid, generally been the case in this best possible of worlds, and will continue so until chaos shall have come again."

Worthington, having once more given full expression to his feelings of gratitude, left the apartment, followed by the rector, both feeling delighted with the issue of their visit.

For a short time after their departure the face of the Earl of Forestdale bore the gratified expression which generally lights up the features of those who have just performed some act of which they have reason to be proud. As, however, the effects of the generous impulse by which he had been lately prompted wore away, his countenance gradually resumed the apathetic expression common to those who are nearly *blasé*. Having thrown himself languidly upon a sofa, and taken up a newspaper, he occupied himself for a few minutes in casting his eyes over its columns. Finding, however, therein nothing to interest him, he at length rang the bell.

"Is Dyson returned?" he inquired of the servant who had answered the summons.

"No, my Lord," was the answer.

"When he comes back send him upstairs immediately," said his master; "that

fellow is becoming much less sharp than he formerly was," he continued to himself. "I particularly enjoined him last night to make inquiries the first thing this morning about that pretty young milliner-girl I saw in the street and followed home. A few years since he would have returned several hours ago with every necessary preliminary settled, while, at present, he is not only very slow in finding out what he is sent to discover, but frequently fails altogether in acquiring any desirable information. If his faculties continue to deteriorate, I must find some one to fill his place. I have an idea the fellow has taken to drinking. If so, I must either discharge or employ him in some other capacity, more suited to the present state of his intelligence."

A heavy yawn here stopped the flow of the nobleman's thoughts, which was succeeded by several others, each succeeding

one heavier than the one preceding, until by degrees he fell into a gentle slumber, from which he was aroused by the entrance of Dyson, who was the bearer of such favourable tidings, that, after having fallen below zero in his master's estimation, he at once rose to nearly boiling point.

In justice to Lord Forestdale, we must remark that before starting on the visit, so satisfactorily negotiated by his confidential valet, he proceeded to write a letter to his bankers, desiring them to place yearly to the account of the Honourable Mrs William Langley the sum of one thousand pounds, and that very afternoon paid a visit to the first Lord of the Admiralty, for the purpose of advocating the claims of the brave young sailor he had taken under his protection.

END OF VOL. I.

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